


6-1-1968

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Carl Chelf

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A SELECTIVE VIEW OF THE POLITICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY  
AND THE ROLE OF H. H. CHERRY, EDUCATOR-POLITICIAN  
by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College in the University of Nebraska  
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of Political Science

Under the Supervision of Dr. Jasper B. Shannon

Lincoln, Nebraska

June, 1968

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## PREFACE

During the last two decades, since the launching of the first Russian Sputnik jarred Americans out of their complacency, scores of books and articles have been written about American education. Everyone from the top professional educators to top men in the military has had his explanation for why "Johnny can't read." Too much of this writing has been more emotional than it has been thoughtful. This particular study is not aimed at pointing out any of the shortcomings of American education or adding to all the literature explaining the proper goals and objectives of our schools.

This is a study of the role of politics in education--more specifically, the role of politics in the founding and development of a state college. It is not an exposé or an inside story of the sensational, "now it can be told" type. It is simply an analysis and an attempted explanation of the interactions of the various elements in the policy-making process--public opinion, interest groups, individuals, legislators--in the founding and growth of a state college. The study will trace the evolution of an idea or public interest into public policy. This transformation of a public interest through periods of sharp disagreement, indifference and even skepticism into a public program is an excellent example of the political process and its functioning. Out of sometimes bitter argument and sharply conflicting ideas there slowly emerged a legislative program.

This is a rather ambitious undertaking since at the present time not much work has been done on the relations <sup>between</sup> ~~of~~ politics and higher

education. Only in recent years have the historians and political scientists directed their attention to this significant phase of our social and political development. These two fields have in the past been regarded as incompatible, and traditionally politics and education have been studied separately. For decades the study of American education has been surrounded by a non-partisan atmosphere, and educators have shied away from both politics and political scientists. One reason for this has been the fact that political scientists themselves, with only a few exceptions, have virtually ignored the subject of education, only seldom deeming its functions worth more than a chapter or two in state and local government textbooks. Another reason is the fact that professional educators have not made any efforts at political analysis of their own trade, but have instead been much more interested in propagating the myth that education is completely non-political. The reason for this is that politics has become a tarnished word in the American vocabulary and is abhorred by many educators. To many Americans the word politics is synonymous with self-seeking, power-hungry, unprincipled individuals. To describe the educators' activities as being political would be to place them in a poor light as far as many of the public are concerned. So they prefer to be "educational statesmen" rather than "politicians."

It is quite natural for those engaged in a particular profession to regard it as being unique and based on high principles. Such groups which have, or think they have, a unique obligation and a special competence to serve the public, tend to feel that they owe it to their constituency to "stay out of politics." Thus our culture is steeped

in the notion that in matters spiritual and intellectual neither the crassness of the market place nor the power-seeking of the hustings should have any substantial influence.<sup>1</sup> This does not necessarily mean that the avoidance of a recognition of the political nature of education has been cynical or naive. To a marked degree it has been an outgrowth of our culture and was dictated by prudence on the part of educators.

Bailey and his colleagues who have studied this matter have this to say about the situation:

There is irony in the fact that school systems and school problems have rarely been studied as political phenomena. More public money is spent for education than for any other single function of state and local government. No public school in America exists without state legislative sanction. All over the United States school boards are elected or are appointed through a highly political process--often most supremely political when called "non-political." Educational planks are increasingly found in partisan platforms at all levels of American politics. The size, location, costs, looks, and facilities of school buildings are frequently matters of high political controversy. The size, scope and influence of state departments of education are inevitably conditioned by political forces. . . . In short, education is one of the most thoroughly political enterprises in American life.<sup>2</sup>

In reality education in the united states is about as non-political as Lyndon Johnson. Education and politics are so interwoven it is impossible to understand one without understanding the other.

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<sup>1</sup>Stephen Bailey et al., Schoolmen and Politics: A Study of State Aid to Education in the Northeast (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), p. viii.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. viii.

This is really no cause for great alarm because politics does not necessarily mean the dirty business many people immediately think of when they hear the word. When someone says education should be "non-political," what he is really saying is that education should not be a partisan matter or an area exploited for political patronage. This is sound reasoning, for the use of the schools for patronage purposes could destroy them. But the term politics as used in this study has a much fuller meaning than this. Politics, according to Harold Lasswell's classic definition, is the study of influence and the influential. In this respect, politics includes the making of governmental decisions and the struggle to gain or retain the power to make those decisions. In this much broader sense, politics is concerned with the forces and influences which shape and determine public policy. In our nation these policy decisions are not made in a vacuum but are the product of a complex system involving many forces and pressures both felt and anticipated. Groups and individuals exert their pressures on this process through many channels.

Education is, of course, one of the many participants in this intricate political process. Governmental decisions pertaining to education are the result of the great multiplicity of pressures and influences brought to bear in this complex system. Organized groups of educators and educational clientele wield their influence with varying degrees of success. Those concerned with educational policy have no choice but to negotiate with political officials who are at the same time being pressured by other interests that desire other goals--higher expenditures for urban transportation, for better highways, for

mental health or for lower taxes. John K. Galbraith wrote in The Affluent Society:

Education, no less than national defense or foreign assistance, is in the public domain. It is subject to the impediments to resources allocation between private and public use. So, once again, our hope for survival, security, and contentment returns us to the problem of guiding resources to the most urgent ends.<sup>3</sup>

The textbook approach used in the past by both the political scientists and educators, which emphasizes formal structure, functions and problems, conceals the fact that education is really a dynamic thing highly sensitive to political conflicts and changes, many of them not even directly related to educational considerations. Consciously or unconsciously educators are an integral part of the policy-making process, and whether they like it or not, they are engaged in politics and are to one degree or another politicians. Today education is a vital function of government and educators are vital participants in the decision-making process.

One of the best examples of the interrelation of politics and education is the founding and development of state colleges. Few people are aware of the arguments, struggles and personal sacrifices that went into the movement to establish these institutions. This goal was realized only after a prolonged and demanding political struggle. In almost every instance the supporters of state institutions of higher learning encountered stiff opposition from the religious interests which were in control of higher education during the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries, and most of the

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<sup>3</sup>John K. Galbraith, The Affluent Society (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958), p. 355.

state schools in this country passed through a storm-and-stress period in their development. In practically every instance, educational progress was achieved only after long periods of agitation and the development of strong educational sentiment on the part of the public; thus the founding of these institutions illustrates the evolution of a public interest into a demand for legislative action.

The people, through articulate demands, organized groups and personal contacts can have, and have had, considerable impact on educational progress. All of these activities are political in nature. A public decision made within the political process may itself concern an issue which lies outside of politics. It may involve any number of things which in themselves would not be considered strictly political, but to the extent that they involve the interactions of citizens and citizen organizations and state legislative bodies these matters take on a political aspect. So it is with matters of education.

Because politics and education have traditionally been regarded as incompatible, it is rather difficult to gain the information necessary for a study of this type. Persons having the most information are often reluctant to talk; therefore, this study is of necessity incomplete and sometimes exploratory in nature. It raises as many questions as it answers. Yet this is an area that warrants study now. Concern over the goals and accomplishments of our schools emphasizes the need for a fuller understanding of how educational policy is made. All the significant political factors need to be revealed if the people are going to express their desires clearly and effectively control the governmental process.

The future of public education in this country is a crucial political issue, and a fit subject for study by political scientists. In fact, it is an area to which they should devote more attention than they have in the past. Several more years of extensive research will probably be necessary to answer many of the questions concerning the interrelationships of education and the legislative and political processes, but now is the time to start. This particular study is necessarily limited in its scope, but many of the conclusions drawn here hold true for the development of educational systems throughout the nation.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1966 the Kentucky General Assembly enacted legislation making significant changes in the higher educational structure of the state. By action of the state legislature the four state colleges, Eastern, Western, Murray and Morehead, were designated as universities; and the old Council on Public Higher Education, composed largely of the presidents of the state colleges and members of their governing boards, was replaced by a nine-member lay council appointed by the governor.

This action by the legislature marked the climax of a struggle that had been going on in the higher educational circles of the state for years. The big question has been how to coordinate the activities of higher education more effectively.

In earlier years, in state after state, the legislatures created colleges wherever the demand developed. In many states there appeared normal schools, state colleges, state universities, land grant colleges and two-year community colleges. All these were in addition to private colleges of various types. Around the turn of the century such visionaries as A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard saw an America "aglow with universities and colleges like a field with campfires of an army on the march."<sup>1</sup>

It wasn't too long before these institutions began to lose some of their lustre as the state legislators had to spend more and more time acting as referees for the colleges as they vied with one another for appropriations. The college presidents spent more and more time

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<sup>1</sup>As quoted by James Driscoll in "Order Out of Chaos: Coordinators Referee Colleges' Money Fights." Courier-Journal (Louisville, Kentucky), January 12, 1966.



pressing their claims before the legislatures, and legislative hearings sometimes turned into verbal dogfights between competing college presidents.

Higher education in Kentucky followed a pattern similar to this, with the University of Kentucky, the state colleges and the private colleges competing with one another. Through the years various reforms were debated for improving the system, but little progress was made. In 1934 the Council on Public Higher Education was created with the primary function of coordinating the teacher education program at the state colleges and the University of Kentucky. By 1954 the Council had taken on the larger task of general coordination of public higher education in the state. In this role the Council faced some pressing problems. How should the state meet the increasing demands for higher education? Would it be better to expand existing institutions? Or, should community junior colleges be established across the state as two-year branches of the University of Kentucky? In its report to the Governor in 1961, the Governor's Commission on Higher Education warned that:

In the distribution of colleges and universities throughout the state, it must be recognized . . . that the program should not be pauperized or thinned down too greatly by the creation of too many schools.<sup>2</sup>

In 1962 Governor Bert Combs quieted the opposition of the state colleges and got the General Assembly to launch the two-year community college program.

Another big problem of the Council has been the coordination of

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<sup>2</sup>Report of the Findings and Recommendations of the Governor's Commission on the Study of Public Higher Education (Frankfort, 1961), p. 2.

the finances and curricula of the several institutions. The college presidents frequently make statements to the effect that they are only acting in the public interest. It is difficult for them to see that their version of the public interest and the well-being of their particular institutions are always one and the same. This is to be expected, of course, and the Governor's Commission said in 1961 that it felt "a college president would not be worth his salt if he did not work for the greatest total development of the institution for which he is responsible."<sup>3</sup> This does, however, create difficulties in coordination, and the Commission noted that:

Only within the last five years has there been any real effort on the part of the administrations of the various schools to coordinate the financing and curricula of the several institutions, and this has not been done to a satisfactory degree in the best interests of all the people of the entire state.<sup>4</sup>

One of the most pressing problems facing the Council was whether the state colleges should be permitted to expand their graduate programs. The state colleges insisted they should, while the University of Kentucky was opposed to such a move. The Governor's Commission in its 1961 report commended the Council on Public Higher Education:

. . . for its success in limiting the spread of advanced graduate education, especially in the field of teacher education, in the other state institutions of higher learning.

. . . It is apparent that the best interests of the state will not be promoted by the diluting of graduate work through its expansion to schools other than the University of Kentucky at present.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

The state colleges continued to press their cause, however, and in 1965 the Kentucky Commission on Higher Education appointed by Governor Breathitt hired a team of experts to study the state's system of higher education and make recommendations for improvement. Probably the most significant result of the survey team's report was the proposal that Eastern, Western, Murray and Morehead State Colleges be elevated to university status.

Representative Ted Osborn of Lexington introduced a bill in the House to give the four state colleges university status and his bill was passed February 16 by a vote of 83 to 0. In the Senate the bill encountered some hurdles. When it was taken up for consideration on February 24, Senator Tom Garrett of Paducah offered an amendment authorizing the establishment of a four-year state college in Paducah. Aided by the votes of some who were opposed to the university bill, Garrett's amendment passed by an 18 to 17 vote. This turn of events was alarming to supporters of the university bill who feared the legislation would be lost if the House failed to concur in the amendment. It was at this stage that the political potency of the state colleges was demonstrated. The next day less than twenty-four hours after adoption of the Garrett Amendment, Majority Floor Leader J. D. Buckman asked for a suspension of the regular Senate rules so the amendment could be considered again. Amid charges of "arm-twisting" by Governor Breathitt and the state college presidents, Buckman's proposal was approved by a vote of 24 to 6. Garrett and his small bloc of supporters tried various tactics to block the bill, but each effort was beaten down and the bill was

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finally passed by a vote of 29 to 6.<sup>6</sup>

The bill passed by the General Assembly was really a compromise between the University of Kentucky and the state colleges. It specified that the University of Kentucky should continue to be the principal state institution for statewide research and service programs; and should provide graduate programs at the masters, doctoral and post doctoral levels, including joint programs beyond the masters level in cooperation with other institutions of higher learning in the state. The bill also gave the University of Kentucky responsibility for professional doctoral instruction in law, medicine, education, engineering and dentistry. The four new universities were authorized to provide graduate programs at the masters level in education, business and the arts and sciences and programs beyond the masters degree to meet the requirements for teachers, school leaders and other certificated personnel. These schools were also authorized to provide research and service programs directly related to the needs of their primary geographical areas. In addition to these provisions the legislation provided for the creation of a new Council on Higher Education to be composed of nine laymen appointed by the governor for staggered terms. The college presidents would remain as members of the Council but would have no vote.

Reaction to the legislation was mixed. John W. Oswald, president of the University of Kentucky, said:

The new legislation has my strong support because of two overriding features that are aimed to provide for the orderly growth and planning of higher

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<sup>6</sup>Courier-Journal, issues of February 17, 25 and 26, 1966.

education.

The new legislation clearly defines the functions that each of the types of institutions would provide: the community colleges, the state colleges and the University of Kentucky.<sup>7</sup>

The attitude of the presidents of the new universities was one of satisfaction that the state had at last recognized their tremendous growth of the last decade. Western President Kelly Thompson said, "There will be no miraculous change. We were already there." All of the presidents felt that the new status would help them recruit better faculty and hold better students in the state, help acquire more federal and private grants, and help expand the role of the institutions and widen their opportunities for service.

There were others who viewed the action of the General Assembly with less optimism. In an editorial of May 23, 1966, the Louisville Courier-Journal raised some questions concerning higher education in the state. It said:

What . . . should be the relationship of the University of Kentucky to the existing state universities and those to be created? Are we to have six or seven state universities competing on the graduate and professional level? Can we afford that, and, if we could, is it desirable?

Shouldn't the University of Kentucky, and a state supported University of Louisville<sup>8</sup> be the two major graduate and professional institutions, and the other state colleges primarily undergraduate in emphasis?

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<sup>7</sup>Courier-Journal, February 26, 1966.

<sup>8</sup>The University of Louisville is a municipal college, but support for making it a state college had been growing, and those favoring such action feared that transforming the state colleges into universities would kill the chances of state support for the University of Louisville.

The writer went on to say that:

The University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville have established professional schools. The other state colleges could have graduate work in certain fields, but what they do should be coordinated with what the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville are doing in order to avoid wasteful duplication.

But here you run into local institutional pride, and there will be pressure from each state university to have its own law school, its own medical school, its own higher degree program.

On June 2 the Courier followed its earlier editorial with another, saying:

It would be both unrealistic and uneconomic to try to pick up the increased burden of duplication and competition over the state at this time. It would be far better if the Commission on Higher Education pressed for a quality program at the University of Kentucky rather than assuming the role of a mere coordinating group, dependent for its direction upon the hopes and aspirations of administrators and alumni of the new universities.

Quality is the vital goal in the development of graduate studies. The Kentucky Commission will need more economic support from the general assembly and the courage to stand against pressures from various campuses in order to achieve this goal.

The survey team studying the state's system of higher education had anticipated such charges when they noted that:

. . . the concern that these institutions might offer graduate degrees of inferior quality or dissipate their energies by engaging in advanced graduate study, (should not) be allowed to hinder the growth of the regional state colleges of the Commonwealth.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Higher Education in Kentucky 1965-1975: A Program of Growth and Development. A Report of the Survey Team for the Long-range Study of Higher Education in Kentucky (Frankfort, 1966), p. 83.

The group ended its views on this subject by quoting Bernard Berelson, who observed:

The anticipated expansion of doctoral study in or to a new class of universities has always raised concern about standards in those institutions already well established (even though most of them had to struggle upward in the same way). But it is important not to lose sight of the benefits, both locally and nationally, of the moderate expansion of doctoral study.

Locally the effect is generally to improve the instruction, not simply at the graduate level but throughout, because of the attraction of graduate students and a better faculty.

Berelson concluded:

Graduate study helps institutions grow in quality, as all those now at the top once had to do.<sup>10</sup>

Anyway some of the fears which were expressed by the Courier-Journal were a bit premature because, as David Hawpe pointed out in an Associated Press article:

None of the regional universities will have doctorate or professional programs in the foreseeable future and none of their presidents sees much need for them now.<sup>11</sup>

But there are other problems which will be even more pressing. The action of the General Assembly did put an end to the fears of the state colleges that they would be placed under the University of Kentucky as a part of a unified system of higher education, but it did not eliminate the competition among the institutions of higher learning. Already

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>11</sup>Park City Daily News (Bowling Green, Kentucky), June 15, 1966.

the leaders of the new universities have expressed their dissatisfaction with "suggested inequities in higher education which favor the University of Kentucky over the emerging regional universities,"<sup>12</sup> and have called for "equitable financing." Dr. Adron Doran, President of Morehead, stated, "There is no reason to think the University of Kentucky requires more money at the M. A. and undergraduate levels than we do," and Eastern President Robert Martin responded, "We don't want second-class citizens. All students ought to be supported at the same level."<sup>13</sup> It would be the duty of the newly revised Council on Public Higher Education to devise the formula for dividing the state's funds for higher education, but already the battle of the budget was beginning.

Although the action of the 1966 General Assembly made some significant alterations in the educational structure of the state, it did not mark any radical departure from the pattern set over a half century ago. The regional nature of the state's higher educational structure was retained intact. As Morehead's President Dr. Adron Doran pointed out, "the legislation identified the roles of each of the colleges as a center of gravity in the regions where they are located." He said the act "guaranteed the autonomy of the local boards to develop programs that would be beneficial to the people of the regions."<sup>14</sup> This regional approach to higher education has its roots in the earlier educational background of the state and the regional nature of Kentucky politics.

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<sup>12</sup>Park City Daily News, June 17, 1966.

<sup>13</sup>Courier-Journal, June 17, 1966.

<sup>14</sup>Park City Daily News, June 17, 1966.



Both of these factors will be explored more fully in the succeeding chapters.

## CHAPTER II

### Political Background of Education in Kentucky

Educational development in Kentucky has been greatly influenced by the politics of the state. In order to understand the development of education in the Commonwealth, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the social and political background of its citizens.

Kentucky's development as a frontier state did not follow the pattern set forth by Frederick Jackson Turner for frontier growth. Kentucky society was not the result of any gradual evolution of frontier life by slow degrees from rude explorers and hunters, but rather it was a portion of the civilization of the older states, especially Virginia, Maryland and North Carolina, transplanted in the wilderness. From the very outset there were divisions of property ownership and social position parallel to those in the older states. Quite early an obvious class structure in which no social stratum felt completely secure developed because large numbers of landowners were not at all confident about their land titles, and their insecurity was transferred into their social and political life. As a result of the speculative tendencies revealed by many of the leaders of the state, the common citizens lacked confidence in them. Each class was striving hard for advancement, and each was highly suspicious of the other. Because of this there was a distinct class antagonism in Kentucky which was not evident on the surface in frontiers elsewhere. Members of each class were willing to fight to retain what they regarded as rightfully theirs, not necessarily through force of arms, but through legislative action, legal action in the courts and political organization. This

class antagonism was evident also in the politics of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Social life in Kentucky was much more complex than one might expect considering the state was fundamentally agrarian. The state's social order quite naturally was that of a conservative, landed aristocracy; and along with this social order inherited from the mother state of Virginia came the system of slavery. As was true elsewhere, the ownership of slaves was a primary cause of social distinction, and as the system of slavery grew and developed, it was marked by a progressive separation of society into a richer and poorer class. Slavery influenced the whole social fabric--politics, religion, education, migration from the state, almost every important issue. Kentucky had more slave-owners than any other state except Virginia and ranked third in total number of slaves.<sup>2</sup>

These slaveowners, although numerically a minority, controlled the best lands in the state, possessed most of the wealth and culture, and controlled the public offices because they had the time and money to devote to politics. It was from the rural aristocracy that most of the members of Congress, the state legislature and the higher courts of law were recruited. The state's first constitution adopted in 1792 gave this upper class an opportunity to entrench itself in state politics. It did provide for manhood suffrage and representation according to population, but the governor and state senators were elected by an

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<sup>1</sup>For discussions of early development in Kentucky see Frank L. McVey, The Gates Open Slowly: A History of Education in Kentucky (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1949), pp. 5-9, and Edsel Godbey, The Governors of Kentucky and Education, Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service (Lexington: College of Education, 1900), pp. 1-10.

<sup>2</sup>See A. M. Stickles, Simon Bolivar Buckner: Borderland Knight, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), pp. 47-48.

electoral college and the Court of Appeals was given original jurisdiction over disputed land titles. This was a victory for the landed interests since they could control the higher courts more easily than they could control the county courts with their few trained judges and numerous farmer judges. The second constitution adopted in 1799 did eliminate the latter provision and made the governor and members of the senate directly elected by popular vote, but the second document did not represent any significant setback for the wealthy, conservative elements of the state.<sup>3</sup>

The second social stratum in the state was the middle class--the farmers, professional men and the small businessmen. The middle class farmers in Kentucky, those who though fairly well-to-do, were not slave-owners, were always a strong element in the state's population; but because they were largely dependent upon the upper class economically, the members of the middle class generally went along with the leadership of the conservatives and accepted their policies and programs.<sup>4</sup> For years these farmers were characterized by an innate conservatism, a blind disposition to do as their grandfathers had done. The lack of social opportunities which made the farmer's life rather monotonous caused these farmers to become practically incapable of changing their outlook on life. Thus the middle class became the allies of the aristocrats in preserving the status quo.

The third social group was composed of those who were crowded into the poorer parts of the state--the squatters, tenants, debtors and small

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<sup>3</sup>McVey, op. cit., p. 7-8.

<sup>4</sup>Z. F. Smith, The History of Kentucky (Louisville: Courier-Journal Job Printing, 1892), p. 599.

farmers. They became the "radicals" who hated slaves and slaveowners. Typical of this group were many of the settlers in the areas south and west of the Cumberland and Green rivers. These people bought their land from the state on credit, and many of them very quickly fell behind in their payments because cash was difficult to obtain. Attempts by the state to collect the payments aroused opposition that was soon felt in state politics. These poorer elements constituted a majority, but because they were disorganized their political influence was limited. Gradually with the expansion of education, newspapers and other means of communication, they were able to make their voices heard and exert more influence in state politics.<sup>5</sup>

The first Kentuckians were a restless, aggressive, self-confident people who believed strongly in local self-government and not too much of it. Therefore, they were quite naturally Jeffersonian Republicans who rejoiced over the election of 1800. Jacobin clubs were formed in the larger towns of the state, and whatever federalism there was in the state disappeared.<sup>6</sup>

These early Jeffersonians shared their leader's respect for education, but not many of them felt as he did that it was a responsibility of the state. Most early Kentuckians felt that education was the responsibility of the individual, the family or the church, not a public obligation to be paid for by the state.

During the early years of statehood several efforts were made to establish an effective system of education, but numerous obstacles

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<sup>5</sup>McVey, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>See E. M. Coulter, The Civil War and Readjustment in Kentucky (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1926), pp. 1-2.

caused the failure of these efforts. Pioneer Kentuckians were so pre-occupied with fighting the Indians, securing their land titles, clearing the land and cultivating their crops that they had little time for education. Also the religious beliefs of the public delayed educational development. Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians made up a majority of the population, and of these only the Presbyterians were concerned with education. The Baptists and Methodists were either hostile or indifferent. Another handicap was the sparse population separated by long distances and an absence of effective transportation and communication facilities.<sup>7</sup>

In 1819 a legislative committee was appointed to study education in the state, and two years later a Literary Fund was created. But during the period from 1792 to 1829 the state was plagued by Indian raids, panics, too many state banks, an excess of paper money, and a far-reaching court dispute which kept the legislature from devoting much attention to education.<sup>8</sup>

Up until the Jacksonian Revolution, local issues had dominated Kentucky politics. After 1828 this was no longer true, and as national issues became dominant, Kentucky became a strong Whig state. Jacksonian Democrats were quite numerous among the more radical element--the debtors, small farmers and tenants, but their political strength was limited and they were unable to win many elections. So from 1836 to 1856 Kentucky was solidly Whig. Several factors help account for this: Henry Clay's

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<sup>7</sup>See Niels Henry Sonne, Liberal Kentucky, 1780-1828 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), pp. 15-16.

<sup>8</sup>A. M. Stickles, The Critical Court Struggle in Kentucky, 1819-1829 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1929), p. 5.

influence in the state was tremendous; resentment over Jackson's veto of the Maysville Road bill was strong; and Whig principles appealed to many Kentuckians--the hemp growers wanted a protective tariff; the tobacco planters favored a strong bank; and internal improvements were popular.

The stronghold of the Whigs was the Bluegrass where large numbers of the conservative gentry class supported the party, but many of the mountain inhabitants aligned themselves with the Bourbon Whigs because of their interest in internal improvement. The leaders of the Whig party were in most cases enlightened men, who, on the whole, were interested in the progress of the state. But, typical of the conservative, landed gentry, they were opposed to any hurried social or economic reforms.<sup>9</sup> In general, these Bourbon leaders were interested in maintaining things as they were because an unchanging social order assured them that they would continue to enjoy positions of power and prestige. They were inclined to be disturbed when there was too much talk of public welfare, of social reforms, of liberalizing movements which might interfere with their operations and which emphasized the rights of the masses against the claims of private interests. Eventually they realized that they would be able to hold their own in politics only through an alliance with the smaller farmers and they made some concessions, but for several decades they were able to maintain their dominant position in state politics and control public policy in their own interest. Since these conservative interests saw no great need for public education--they opposed the expense; they felt that education was not a function of the

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<sup>9</sup>See Godbey, op. cit., p. 11.

state; and it would benefit the lower classes more since their own children were already in private schools—little educational progress was made during the period of Whig ascendancy.

During this period, however, one attempt after another was made to establish an effective system of public schools. By this time the theoretical objections to state-supported education were being overcome. Now the big problem was financing. In the 1830's and 1840's the two things vying for tax dollars and legislative votes were education and internal improvements. Unfortunately for education, internal improvements was one of the things most ardently sought by the leaders of the Whig party, and the legislators usually cast their votes for bridges and canals instead of education.<sup>10</sup> When reproached for their slowness in providing education, the legislators always responded that the people were not interested in it. Governor James Clark noted in 1836 that, "The great obstacle to common schools is not so much the defects of the law as the apathy of the people."<sup>11</sup> As a result of this apathy on the part of the people and the legislature, over seventy percent of the children of school age were not in school in the 1830's.

In 1836 when the federal government decided to distribute its treasury surplus among the states, Kentucky received \$1,437,759.39. The General Assembly on February 23, 1837, declared that profits arising from \$1,000,000 of this grant should go for education. The next year the school fund was reduced to \$850,000 as the legislature borrowed \$150,000 to finance internal improvements.<sup>12</sup> In 1838, the General

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>11</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House Journal, 1836-37, p. 79.

<sup>12</sup>Godbey, op. cit., p. 71.



Assembly did adopt a plan for a comprehensive school system. The state was to be divided into districts containing not fewer than thirty nor more than one hundred children and each district was allowed to levy a tax on property within its boundaries. This revenue, added to the amount received from the state school fund, would be used to defray the expenses of the school in the district.<sup>13</sup>

The 1838 school bill was a progressive one for its time. It aimed at inducing the local districts to levy taxes to maintain their own schools. The plan immediately encountered obstacles. The greatest difficulty in putting the system into operation was the indifference of the people and the neglect of the county officials to discharge their duties under the law. The people quickly raised loud complaints against that part of the law authorizing local taxation, and few counties in the state, in the face of the depression gripping the nation at the time, had the courage to vote to tax themselves enough to support common schools in their districts.<sup>14</sup> So the 1838 statute languished on the books.

One year later, in January, 1839, the Kentucky Agricultural Society urged state support to higher education when it memorialized the legislature to establish a state agricultural college. The General Assembly took no action at that time. However, the next year the state senate passed a bill providing for an agricultural college, but the house failed to concur and the scheme was abandoned.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Travis E. Smith, The Rise of Teacher Training in Kentucky (Nashville: George Peabody College, 1932), p. 45.

<sup>14</sup>Z. F. Smith, op. cit., pp. 717-718.

<sup>15</sup>James F. Hopkins, The University of Kentucky: Origins and Early Years (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1951), pp. 54-56.

The turning of the tide in Kentucky as far as public education was concerned was in 1847 with the appointment of Robert J. Breckinridge as Superintendent of Public Instruction. Breckinridge was faced with this situation when he took office: only 23 counties out of 101 in the state reported common schools in operation, and the school fund which should have provided an annual income of about \$63,000, as a result of legislative tampering, yielded about \$6,000 a year for the Board of Education to distribute throughout the state. Breckinridge embarked on a fight to save the school system. He did not simply confine himself to scholarly recommendations, but operated openly and forcefully in the political arena at Frankfort, and every time the legislature met, he was on hand to defend his educational policies.<sup>16</sup>

During his superintendency, Breckinridge led successful efforts to get the school fund provided for in the state's third constitution and to get the school bonds, which had been loaned for internal improvements, repaid. When he left the office in 1852, a deep public interest in education had been aroused and the foundation for a successful state school system had been laid.<sup>17</sup>

It would still be several years before Kentucky's public school system would be complete, however, because although the 1850 constitution provided for a permanent school fund, it did not place a mandate upon the legislature to levy taxes for the schools, and the legislature remained reluctant to do so. Nevertheless the school system was making

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<sup>16</sup>Garvin Davenport, Ante-Bellum Kentucky, Vol. V of the Annals of America Series, eds. Philip Jordan and Charles Thomas (Oxford, Ohio: Mississippi Valley Press, 1943), p. 71.

<sup>17</sup>Charles Dabney, Universal Education in the South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 277.

some progress, and it was boosted in 1855 when the people, in a referendum, approved by a large margin an increase in the school tax levy.<sup>18</sup> Then while the system was still in its development stages, its progress was interrupted by the Civil War. The schools of the state were completely demoralized by the war, and with the coming of peace the system of public education was in a deplorable condition.

The Kentucky of the post-war period was much different from that of 1860. The Civil War, although it did not entirely reshape Kentucky politics, had a tremendous impact. Before the war, the Bourbons, centered in the Bluegrass and Pennyroyal regions, had combined with the poorer classes of the mountains and Knobs to maintain political control of the state. This was a strong Whig coalition. When the Whigs began their drift toward abolition, the Kentucky Bourbons began to leave the party. At first they turned to Know Nothingism, but eventually most of them found their way into the Democratic party. After the war a new coalition emerged. The Bourbon Whigs had joined the Democratic party, but their mountain friends now became Republicans. So the Bourbons formed a new alliance with the farmers of Western Kentucky and the Outer Bluegrass regions who had been strong Democrats since 1828. By doing this the Bourbons were able to retain some of their political power, but they had to make numerous concessions to keep the new coalition intact.

This post-war political evolution was also accompanied by significant social and economic changes. In the late 1860's and 1870's with the hold of the conservative aristocracy loosened, a spirit for

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<sup>18</sup>Kentucky Education Commission, Public Education in Kentucky (New York: General Education Board, 1921), p. 8.

change was evident in the state. This attitude did not prevail immediately, but it began to grow and make its influence felt. The farmers and farm spokesmen began to show more interest in public education and gradually the political leaders began to take note of this.<sup>19</sup>

In 1865 the state provided for its first public institution of higher learning by establishing an agricultural and mechanical college under the provisions of the Morrill Act. Actually the school was a hybrid institution, partly public and partly private and sectarian, but it managed to survive numerous obstacles and eventually became the University of Kentucky.<sup>20</sup>

In 1867 Zach F. Smith was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction, and he embarked on a campaign to get the public schools operating more effectively. He pushed his program with such vigor that education very shortly became an important topic of discussion in the press, in the homes and around the country stores. The political leaders of the state began to feel that more education would be good political strategy. The people were coming more and more to realize that the educational life of the state depended upon the public schools, and in 1869 they approved an increase in school taxes by a 25,000 vote margin. School receipts increased from only \$400,000 in 1869 to almost \$1,000,000 in 1871.<sup>21</sup> In his report for 1875, Superintendent Henderson

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<sup>19</sup>See Edgar Knight, Public Education in the South (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1922), pp. 426-427.

<sup>20</sup>See H. L. Donovan, At the Threshold of Greatness (Lexington: Newcomen Society, 1955), p. 11.

<sup>21</sup>Coulter, op. cit., p. 402.

mentioned the rising tide of public sentiment favorable to education, and noted that many of the wealthy citizens were foremost in advocating taxation for support of schools.<sup>22</sup> This was a marked change in the attitude of this class toward education.

During the 1870's, '80's and '90's, much of the legislature's attention was focused on higher learning. As early as 1867 the legislature showed some concern over the denominational disputes that had enveloped the Agricultural and Mechanical College. Because they felt the Disciples of Christ Church was enjoying special favor from the state, the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians were openly hostile to the new university, and they launched vigorous attacks against the institution.<sup>23</sup>

The 1867 session of the General Assembly adopted a resolution authorizing the appointment of a committee to investigate the operations of the Agricultural and Mechanical College to determine whether or not the institution was controlled by a religious sect. The resolution noted that this possibility was causing a great deal of dissatisfaction. A report from this committee is not available, but five years later in 1872 a five-member committee reported that the contract with the state was not being violated.<sup>24</sup> It is questionable whether this report was wholly in accordance with the facts.

In 1878 the legislature appointed a twelve-man investigatory

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<sup>22</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1875, Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>Donovan, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>J. F. Hopkins, op. cit., pp. 94 ff.

committee with power to take testimony under oath to look into the situation further. This committee made a full report to the legislature recommending complete separation of Kentucky University and the Agricultural and Mechanical College. On March 13, 1878, the General Assembly passed an act replacing previous legislation, and the Agricultural and Mechanical College was then recreated as a separate institution. March 14, 1879, a commission met in Louisville to examine proposals for the permanent location of the new, independent Agricultural and Mechanical College. There were efforts to get the school moved from Lexington. Frankfort had wanted the college for some time, and Cynthiana was also interested. Lexington's chief competition, however, came from Bowling Green, which proposed to give a farm and \$30,000 cash if the Agricultural and Mechanical College were combined with Ogden College already operating in that city. Fearing they might lose the college, the citizens of Lexington quickly raised \$50,000 in bonds and offered the city park for a school site as inducement to the commission to leave the school in Lexington. After careful consideration and to the disappointment of Bowling Green, the commission decided to leave the college in Lexington.<sup>25</sup>

Having established the Agricultural and Mechanical College as an independent institution, the General Assembly enacted legislation in 1880 levying a tax of one-half cent on each \$100 worth of real and personal property to provide funds for the school.<sup>26</sup> This was a significant step because it marked the first time the state had levied a tax

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 118-119.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

for the support of higher education.

The new state college very quickly encountered opposition as the private institutions opposed tax-supported schools of higher learning, and six of the private colleges united to fight the state college. This group charged that the half-cent levy taxed the many for the benefit of the few, and they contended that there were already "almost too many" colleges in the state.<sup>27</sup> The denominational schools wanted the Agricultural and Mechanical College to teach only courses directly related to mechanics and agriculture. In their view it was "unjust to use the power and wealth of the state to injure the existing colleges."<sup>28</sup> They asked:

What encouragement can there be for the citizens of Kentucky to perform generous deeds and build magnificent monuments if the State comes on afterwards and even taxes herself to sweep them all away.<sup>29</sup>

The private institutions of the state were highly regarded and they had several friends in the legislature. In 1882, 1884, 1888 and 1890 bills were introduced to repeal the half-cent tax or to dissolve the Agricultural and Mechanical College. But President James K. Patterson successfully defended his school against these onslaughts and ably presented the case for public higher education.<sup>30</sup>

Not meeting with any success in the legislature, the private interests turned to the courts. In two cases, finally decided by the Court of Appeals in 1890, the constitutionality of the one-half cent tax was

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Lexington Daily Transcript, November 22, 1881.

<sup>30</sup>J. F. Hopkins, op. cit., pp. 144-149.

upheld. Those bringing the suits contended that the tax violated Article 11 of the Constitution because it levied a tax for use other than by the common schools and had not been submitted to the people for a vote. The case for the Agricultural and Mechanical College was argued by three of the state's most outstanding lawyers, W. C. P. Breckinridge, Temple Bodley and Henry S. Barker. In giving the decision of the Court, Chief Justice William Holt pointed out that other institutions of educational character which were not a part of the common school system had been supported by general taxation for years. He said:

If it be true that the framers of our Constitution intended to forbid any public aid to any educational institution save our common schools, then they did that which, so far as we have been able to examine, has been done in no other state in the Union;

. . . . .  
In our opinion, this article of the Constitution (Article 11), when all of it is considered, and especially when read in the light of its history, the mischief intended to be remedied, and the practical construction which has been given to it, does not forbid aid by the state to an educational institution other than a common school, if the Legislature, in its wisdom, sees fit to extend it. The framers of it and the people adopting it were moved, not by a fear of too much education, but of too little, by a future diversion of the school fund to other purposes.<sup>31</sup>

The A & M College had won before both the legislature and the courts, but the private interests continued their battle. In 1890 when a convention was called to revise the state constitution, efforts were made to include a section in the new document prohibiting state aid to higher education. The report of the Committee on Education

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<sup>31</sup>Higgins v. Prater and Hill v. Hamilton, 91 Kentucky Reports 18, (1890).



included a clause providing that educational appropriations for uses other than by the common schools must be submitted to a popular vote. The friends of public higher education interpreted this as an attack on the A & M College. William Beckner, delegate from Fayette County, saw this not as a move to protect the people, but an effort to weaken the A & M College.<sup>32</sup> In a lengthy address to the convention he said:

The Chairman, in effect, forbids aid to normal schools, the A & M College, the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb or the School for the Blind, unless approved by a vote of the people. This was aimed at the (A & M) college, but it certainly embraces the other institutions which are for educational purposes. Why should the question of making appropriations for these great objects be submitted to popular vote any more than when asked for lunatic asylums or penitentiaries? Is there more doubt about the obligation of the state to sustain them than there is as to its duty to provide for its non compotes or its criminals?<sup>33</sup>

C. J. Bronston, Beckner's colleague from Fayette County, also viewed the Committee's report as containing a strike at the A & M College. He said there was a class in the state who had been opposed to public higher education from the beginning.<sup>34</sup> L. T. Moore agreed that the "true assault in the majority report is against the A & M College."<sup>35</sup>

The debates at the 1890 convention indicate that there was a great deal of opposition to public higher education. Many of the delegates who had accepted public elementary and secondary education

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<sup>32</sup>Debates of the Constitutional Convention, 1890 (Frankfort, 1890), p. 4472.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 4494.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 4530.

expressed themselves against state supported higher education. L. W. Lassing, delegate from Boone County, said he was opposed to "expending any sum of money for any higher education whatever, either to the A & M College at Lexington or to any other educational institution."<sup>36</sup> He said that soon the legislature would be called upon to support institutions throughout the state and taxes would become "mountain high."<sup>37</sup> John Rodes, delegate from Warren County, said, "I do not believe in what they call higher education given by the state."<sup>38</sup> Rodes later made a plea for state aid to Ogden College, a private college in his hometown of Bowling Green. Thomas J. Munn, the representative from Crittenden County, said he did not believe the convention wanted to allow colleges throughout the state to come before the legislature for appropriations. He said he did not think the legislature should be allowed the power to levy taxes for supporting colleges without a vote by the people.<sup>39</sup> Bennett H. Young, one of the Louisville delegates, stated:

We have gone as far as we ought to go towards giving higher education to a limited number of the children of the state. . . . I do not believe in the principle by which taxation is levied for the purpose of giving higher education to a limited number at the expense of the whole.<sup>40</sup>

Although they encountered strong opposition, the friends of higher education were able to get a clause adopted preserving the

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 4505.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 4505.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 4558.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 4566.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 4516.

one-half cent tax for the A & M College. But in spite of the eloquent pleas of men like Beckner, Williams, Bronston and H. H. Smith, the convention declined to adopt a liberal provision which would have paved the way for a broad system of public higher education. H. H. Smith, the representative from Hardin County, said, ". . . it is the duty of every government in this world to educate, and educate highly, those of its people who are not able to educate themselves."<sup>41</sup> But too many of the delegates were opposed to increased taxation, and therefore, were opposed to a system of tax-supported higher education.

The private school interests, defeated before the legislature, the courts and the constitutional convention, next inserted the new issue of Darwinism and took their battle to the people. Sermons denouncing the "Godless State College" and its atheistic professors who were teaching evolution were preached from the pulpits from one end of the state to the other. As a result of these attacks, many citizens developed a rather low esteem for tax-supported colleges which persisted for some time. Eventually this hostility from sectarian forces became weaker so that by 1900 it was not impressive; yet, it took the people of the state almost 100 years from the time they joined the union to realize that unless the state assumed complete and exclusive responsibility they would never have an effective system of higher education. But the state's citizens finally

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 4516.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 4572.

accepted the idea that public institutions of higher learning and church supported institutions could work together, with each supplementing the efforts of the other.<sup>43</sup> This was an important step toward the acceptance of public higher education.

After 1890 public opinion began to become more favorable toward the idea of state supported higher education, but other issues came to dominate the political scene and education was virtually ignored for several years.

In the 1890's the effective coalition of Bourbons and smaller farmers that had been put together after the Civil war was torn by Populism. Because of agrarian discontent in the state, Populist strength became a real threat to the Democrats in the 1890's, and in 1891 the Populist candidate for governor polled 25,031 votes and the party elected one state senator and twelve representatives.<sup>44</sup> The Democrats took note, and Governor John Young Brown's administration passed just enough of the Populist program to draw many members back into the Democratic fold. After 1891 Populist strength in Kentucky began to wane, but the effect of the movement on the Democratic party was not yet complete.

In 1895 the Democrats adopted a platform endorsing the gold standard and then nominated a free silver advocate, P. Wat Hardin, as their candidate for governor. This opened a wide rift in party ranks and the Republicans elected their first governor in the state's

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<sup>43</sup>McVey, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>44</sup>Thomas D. Clark, A History of Kentucky (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1937), p. 598.

history. In the presidential election the next year, Kentucky Democrats were still badly split over the money issue and many either supported Palmer and Buckner, the gold Democrats, voted for McKinley or stayed at home. As a result McKinley carried the state by slightly under 300 votes.<sup>45</sup>

Smarting from their defeats in the elections of 1895 and 1896, the Democrats set out to recoup their political fortunes. With William Goebel, an astute machine politician, as their leader, they launched an aggressive campaign. Goebel was identified with the reform element of the Democratic party and was not accepted by many of the members of the old political oligarchy of the state. Nevertheless, through some very clever political maneuvering he was able to get the Democratic nomination for governor in the 1899 convention.

Many Democrats came away from the Louisville convention highly dissatisfied, and the newspapers of the state began to choose up sides. Henry Watterson, editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal and a leader in the party, had to swallow hard but managed to down the bitter pill of Goebelism. His paper referred to the state convention as being "masterly managed." Others simply could not accept Goebel and the Music Hall Convention, and on August 16, 1899, a group designating themselves the Honest Election Democratic Party met in Lexington and chose John Young Brown as their candidate for governor.<sup>46</sup>

The gubernatorial election of 1899 marked the climax of the

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<sup>45</sup>A. M. Stickles, Simon Bolivar Buckner: Borderland Knight, p. 414.

<sup>46</sup>John Minton, "The Political Prosecution and Trials of Caleb Powers" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of History, University of Kentucky, 1947), p. 25.

struggle in the Democratic party between the Bourbons and the middle income farmers of Western Kentucky. Goebel sensed that political alignment in the state was coming more and more to be based upon economics rather than heredity and social status, and his expressed ambition was to snatch the state from the clutches of the exploiting capitalists and large corporations and turn it back to the farmers and small businessmen. Knowing the farmers wanted free silver, Bryan, cheap freight rates and free textbooks, this is what Goebel offered in his platform. More than half the leaders of the old Kentucky Democracy were against him and most of his program.

The campaign between Goebel, Brown and the Republican, William S. Taylor, was bitterly fought and packed with emotion. The Brown and Goebel factions attacked one another viciously, and the entire state was tense as a result of the heated partisan campaign. Election day was surprisingly quiet and orderly; and when the votes were tallied, Taylor, the Republican, had 193,174, Goebel had 191,331 and Brown had 12,140.<sup>47</sup> On December 12, 1899, William S. Taylor was inaugurated without incident. Two days later Goebel and his running mate, J. C. W. Beckham, at the insistence of party leaders, filed contests of the election.<sup>48</sup>

This action by the Democratic candidates marked the beginning of a disastrous chain of events. The contest boards chosen in the General Assembly were heavily partisan in favor of the Democrats.

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<sup>47</sup>Minton, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

The Republicans, having little hope of success before the contest boards, decided to bring groups of citizens to the capital to impress the legislature with Taylor's public support. Large numbers of mountaineers from Eastern Kentucky flocked to Frankfort, many of them armed to the teeth. The atmosphere in Frankfort grew more and more tense as armed bands roamed the streets. The climax came on January 30 when a hidden rifleman shot and fatally wounded Goebel as he approached the capitol.<sup>49</sup>

The contest boards met hurriedly and declared Goebel and Beckham to be the winners of the contested election. For the report to become final, however, it must be approved by the General Assembly, and Governor Taylor had already adjourned the legislature to meet in London, Kentucky, on February 6. When Democratic legislators ignored the order and tried to meet anyway, they were kept out of the state-house by the militia. Finally they met secretly in the Capitol Hotel and approved the reports of the contest boards. On the night of January 31, Goebel and Beckham were sworn in as governor and lieutenant governor. Three days later Goebel died and was succeeded by Beckham.<sup>50</sup>

Goebel's rise to power and his assassination had a tremendous impact upon the Democratic party. In exploiting the Populist sentiment of the 1890's, Goebel was establishing a pattern for 20th century southern demagoguery. The tendency of the Democratic party to champ-

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<sup>49</sup>Stickles, Simon Bolivar Buckner: Borderland Knight, p. 415.

<sup>50</sup>Minton, op. cit., p. 47.

ion social and economic reforms toward the end of the century had already alienated many Bourbons and business leaders, and Goebel's personality and techniques were such as to increase the factional strife. He was an able man, but a bitter partisan--hardly the type to serve as peacemaker.

The bitterness engendered by Goebel's assassination is hard to picture. In 1900 Samuel Adams wrote:

How deeply the bitterness of the Goebel killing has entered the daily life of Kentucky, no outsider can fully realize. The animosities engendered by it have brought about scores of fatal quarrels. Business partnerships have been dissolved. Churches have been disrupted. Lifelong friendships have been withered. Families have been split. There is no locality so remote, no circle so closely knit as to have escaped the evil influence.<sup>51</sup>

It was virtually impossible to find anyone in the state with an impartial point of view. Clark says, "No other single incident affected the course of modern Kentucky politics so much as did the assassination of William Goebel."<sup>52</sup> The guilt or innocence of men charged with murdering William Goebel became a leading issue in the political campaigns from 1900 to 1908, and Johnson in his history of Kentucky notes:

For years after the death of Mr. Goebel, pitiful politicians used his assassination as their stock in trade in their pursuit of office and even now, when he has lain in his grave for eleven years, there are not wanting some whose souls are so small, that ghoul-like,

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<sup>51</sup>Samuel Adams, American Annual Cyclopaedia as quoted by Ruby Baugher in Kentucky Yesterday and Today (Evansville: Creative Press, Inc., 1962), p. 287.

<sup>52</sup>Thomas D. Clark, A History of Kentucky (Lexington: John Bradford Press, 1960), p. 605.



they metaphorically dig up his remains to excite the populace and accomplish their pitiful little ends.<sup>53</sup>

Irvin S. Cobb said Goebel "left as a malign legacy to his state the active seeds of a political feud which after the lapse of more than twenty years have not quit sprouting."<sup>54</sup> Luke Blackburn, in his funeral oration, said, "The shot that struck Goebel down sounded the death knell of the political organization of his opponents for all time in Kentucky, . . ."<sup>55</sup> This did not prove to be the case as factional struggles continued in the Democratic party for several years to come.

During this period of strife within the Democratic party, the pattern of factional and regional politics that would prevail in Kentucky until the present day was formed. The stage was set for political warfare between divergent economic interests in the state. One element in the party has been bent on developing business and industry and rescuing the state from rural rule, while the other has voiced the resentment of the urban workers and the farmers against the abuses of the "interests" and the corporations. The strength of each of these elements has been centered in certain sections of the state and this has given state politics a regional aspect. Since no one region is strong enough to dominate the party and beat the Republicans alone, a sort of coalition politics is necessary. To keep all

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<sup>53</sup>E. Polk Johnson, A History of Kentucky and Kentuckians (New York: Lewis Publishing Company, 1912), p. 515.

<sup>54</sup>Irvin S. Cobb, Myself--To Date (New York: Review of Reviews Corp., 1923), pp. 93-94.

<sup>55</sup>Urey Woodson, The First New Dealer (Louisville: The Standard Press, 1939), p. 47.

the elements satisfied, it is necessary to distribute the services of government carefully. When roads are being built some must be in Western Kentucky, some in Central Kentucky and some in Eastern Kentucky. The same thing has been true in education. To get sufficient support for a measure, the benefits must be spread across the state. Thus the regional approach to higher education.

### CHAPTER III

#### Professional Pressure and Educational Development

Today the Kentucky Education Association (KEA) is one of the most effective lobbying groups in the state. The influence of the organization was illustrated quite well in 1966. The KEA asked for salary increases for Kentucky's classroom teachers of \$900 over the next two years. When Governor Edward Breathitt announced his budget for the next biennium, it provided for increases of only \$400. The KEA then called for a one-day walkout of the state's teachers and threatened to ask the parent National Education Association to black-list Kentucky schools if the governor didn't provide more money. The teacher walkout was staged February 3, and although its impact was reduced when a heavy snowstorm closed many of the state's schools anyway, the teachers made it quite clear that they were willing to go all out for better salaries. Governor Breathitt decided he didn't care to buck the KEA, and he put his Commission on School Financing to work to come up with a solution to the problem. By the end of February, the state's economists had provided the answer. They discovered that a fast-growing economy would generate more taxes providing the state with almost 24 million additional revenue dollars that would be available for increased teacher salaries. Thus the KEA's demands were met.

Speaking to a KEA audience at the opening of their annual convention later in the year, Governor Breathitt told them that they had acted "in the great tradition of free expression, free speech and free political action." He went on to add:

One of the great safety valves in our system is the right of every citizen . . . to express opinions upon legislative matters and even to light a fire under a governor if necessary, . . .

The strength and vigor of your activities has been felt in legislative halls . . . and in the executive offices of your state government.<sup>1</sup>

The KEA has not always enjoyed the degree of success achieved in this particular instance, but down through the years, it has been a potent influence in the educational development of the state.

The professionalization and organization of Kentucky teachers have roots extending back into the early educational development of the state. In 1829 the Western Academic Institute and Board of Education, which later became the Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers, was organized in Cincinnati, Ohio.<sup>2</sup> Kentucky was an important member of this organization whose objective was the promotion of educational progress and the professionalization of teachers. The influence of the Western Literary Institute was undoubtedly felt in Kentucky, and the movement gave dignity to the teaching profession and encouraged educational organization. These were important steps toward more influence for the teachers of the state.

At an early date, state and local educational organizations were formed in Kentucky. In November, 1833, a convention of teachers was held in Lexington and met for three days discussing matters pertaining to education and the teaching profession.<sup>3</sup> In 1834, the

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<sup>1</sup>Park City Daily News, May 14, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

Kentucky Common School Society was organized in Frankfort to try to develop some support for public education. In 1835 a group known as the Kentucky State Convention of Teachers and Friends of Education was started and held meetings periodically for the next two decades.<sup>4</sup> These early educational organizations were outgrowths of the conviction that organized effort would be necessary to overcome the general indifference toward public education, and they played a significant role in the educational advancement of the state.

The school legislation passed in 1838 created the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the occupants of this office became leaders in the efforts to organize and professionalize the state's teachers. Many of these men felt that the best way to accomplish a greater professionalization of the teaching force was by founding state normal schools to train them. Some awareness of the need for teacher training institutions had been evidenced for several years. As early as 1819, Robert Wickliffe, acting as chairman of the Committee on Education in the State House of Representatives, called attention to the necessity of preparing people to teach.<sup>5</sup> In the 1820's and 1830's there was a great deal of talk about providing teacher training at Transylvania University. During this period, a theory or philosophy of teacher training was developing including these concepts:

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 95-99.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

1. The preparation of teachers for the public schools is a responsibility of the state.
2. The state is obligated to establish suitable schools for this purpose as a necessary part of its work in public education.
3. The proper training of the teacher for his work consists of a knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, practice in the art of teaching, and a knowledge of the mental experiences involved in the process of learning and in the formulation of desirable habits.
4. Means of insuring the growth of the teachers in service are no less factors than providing for their original training.<sup>6</sup>

The leader in this movement for teacher training at Transylvania was Benjamin O. Peers. Considering all the existing institutions, Peers concluded that institutions set up solely for the purpose were the only means of fully preparing prospective teachers. In his address upon his inauguration as President of Transylvania in November, 1833, he said:

Let us establish in connection with Transylvania a department for educating teachers, and let us proffer its advantages to all who aspire after respectable qualifications for this more important office.<sup>7</sup>

A dispute developed between Peers and the board of trustees and this brought an end to his plans, but these early proposals started many people to thinking in terms of special schools for the training of teachers, and through the years support for such institutions increased.

A state institution for the training of teachers was actually recommended to the General Assembly eight years before the first

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

normal school in America was founded in Massachusetts in 1838.<sup>8</sup> In 1830, Benjamin O. Peers, in a report on education to the state legislature, recommended such a school. He reported that he found teachers all over the country to be poorly trained, poorly paid and held in low professional esteem. He stated:

. . . the vocation of a teacher, . . . has either not been fully understood or not duly estimated. It is, or ought to be, ranked among the learned professions . . . I therefore, recommend a seminary for the education of teachers. . . .<sup>9</sup>

He went on to say that not a single legislature in the Union had made provision for such an institution and asked:

May it not be left to Kentucky to distinguish herself by setting a proud example in this particular? Others have suggested the scheme of an institution for this purpose; universal approbation and mature experience advise it; and can it be too much to hope from the wisdom and liberality of our Legislature, or can it be judged officious, to express the hope that it may soon be made the subject of a moderate experiment?<sup>10</sup>

The legislature ignored this part of the Peer's report as they did his other suggestions.

Ryland T. Dillard, Kentucky's fifth Superintendent of Public Instruction (1843-1847) also tried to impress upon the legislature the need for teacher training institutions by stressing the fact that the establishment of normal schools would gradually bring the teaching occupation to a professional status and would greatly improve

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<sup>8</sup>A. O. Norton (ed.), The First State Normal School in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926), p. xiii.

<sup>9</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, Report of the Committee on Education, 1830, pp. 34-35.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

the quality of instruction. He told the legislature:

Most respectfully would the Superintendent press upon the legislature the vast importance of competent teachers. The elevation of the schoolmaster in the public estimation is indispensable for a good and thorough instruction.<sup>11</sup>

The legislature remained unimpressed.

In 1847 Robert J. Breckinridge, the Horace Mann of Kentucky, was appointed to the office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. During the six years he occupied the office he waged an incessant battle to improve teacher training, repeatedly urging that a state normal school be established. In his 1850 report on the school system he wrote at length on the necessity of establishing normal schools, concluding:

The people of the state will prefer good teachers to indifferent ones; and if the state prefer that those good teachers should be strangers and foreigners, rather than their own sons, she has only to refuse all provisions for training them at home, and this result is secured.<sup>12</sup>

On December 16, 1850, a bill was introduced in the Senate to reorganize Transylvania University and to establish in it a school for teacher training. When the measure came up for a vote it was tabled, but the closeness of the vote, 16 to 12,<sup>13</sup> was encouraging to the supporters of teacher training. In 1851 other matters of education took priority over teacher training and nothing further

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<sup>11</sup>Barksdale Hamlett, History of Education in Kentucky (Frankfort: Department of Education, 1914), p. 36.

<sup>12</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1850-51, p. 621.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 715.



was done, but the idea of a teacher training school at Transylvania was not abandoned.

By the 1850's the principal tenets of a theory of public education and teacher training had been expressed and their merits rather widely accepted among the educational leaders of the state. The theory contained the following elements:

1. General education of all children is necessary for the preservation of the institutions of government.
2. Being a public necessity as well as a public benefit, the state is obligated to afford the means of educational opportunity to its children.
3. In so doing, the state is responsible for the means of making its educational system effective.
4. The effectiveness of the system depends to a great extent upon those to whom the work of teaching is entrusted.
5. The work of teaching depends upon a process of technical training involving, in addition to knowledge of subject matter, an acquaintance with the techniques of teaching.
6. Schools for this purpose are as much the responsibility of the state as the public schools themselves.
7. In order to retain the privileges of supervision and guarantee the benefits of effective instruction, these schools should be maintained at public expense.<sup>14</sup>

There were those in the state who honestly opposed these theories, but there were many more who were simply indifferent to them. The indifference was even more difficult to overcome than the opposition. Smith says that if ever a group were called upon to make bricks without straw, it was that group <sup>which</sup> ~~who~~ tried to demonstrate the benefits of public education when the one thing that was absolutely essential to the success of the system—an adequate supply of competent tea-

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<sup>14</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 166.

chers--was being withheld from them.<sup>15</sup>

In November, 1851, Breckinridge called for a convention of the friends of education to meet in Frankfort on the twelfth day of the month. The meeting was held in the Presbyterian Church, and one of the topics on the agenda was the establishment of normal schools. A five-man committee reported the following resolution which was approved by the convention:

Resolved

.....  
That adequate provision should be made for training teachers for the Common Schools of the State, either by establishment of a general Normal School or otherwise, and that the friends of common school education are advised to petition the Legislature to take immediate steps towards the accomplishment of this important object.<sup>16</sup>

This meeting was timed so as to coincide with the meeting of the General Assembly and was a refined form of the education lobby, but the state legislature was unmoved.

Breckinridge was not successful in his efforts to induce the state to establish normal schools, but his suggestion that Transylvania be reorganized into an institution for training teachers bore fruit shortly after he left office. John Matthews, Breckinridge's successor, endorsed the Transylvania plan, and in 1856 the University's board of trustees proposed to turn the properties of the University over to the state for the purpose of establishing a

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>16</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 63.

teacher training institution.<sup>17</sup> In February a bill to reorganize Transylvania was defeated in the House 45 to 42, but on March 4 the vote was reconsidered and the bill was passed in the House 56 to 37.<sup>18</sup> On March 8, it was approved by the Senate, and March 10 was signed by the governor and became law.

The State Normal School opened in Lexington on the first Monday in September, 1856, with about eighty pupils in attendance. The establishment of the normal school at Transylvania marked a long step forward, and the friends of education throughout the state were elated. The Superintendent reported to the next session of the legislature that "The state has every reason to be proud of her school for teachers, and to cherish it as the apple of her eye."<sup>19</sup> But the work of the school had hardly gotten underway when efforts were begun to repeal the act. In 1858, only two years after the school was started, the legislature, on the pretense of unconstitutionality, refused to renew the appropriation for the school. This action was followed very shortly by an act disestablishing the normal school.<sup>20</sup> Superintendent Matthews said no commanding and controlling opinion decided the minds of those who repealed the bill, and he listed the following as some of the reasons given for the repeal of the act:

1. The act conferred too much authority on the commissioners of the county schools in selecting students who should attend the schools;

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

<sup>18</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House Journal, 1856, pp. 89 and 93.

<sup>19</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 85.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 86.

2. It diverted too much money from the common school fund;
3. The school was impracticable;
4. The time required to train teachers for all the schools was too remote;
5. The school was too expensive;
6. The young men trained in the school would decline to teach and would seek more lucrative occupations.<sup>21</sup>

Some efforts were made to save the school. In the Senate, John Fisk proposed that the bill to repeal the law be recommitteed to the committee with instructions that it be amended to make appropriations for the school out of the general fund for two years and the question of further appropriations should be submitted to a vote of the people. This proposal was rejected 18 to 16.<sup>22</sup> Senator James Budduth proposed an amendment providing that the surplus paid by Bourbon and Fayette counties into the School Fund be used to support the Normal Schools. This amendment was defeated 24 to 13.<sup>23</sup> In the House, Representative James Jackson of Christian County proposed an amendment to provide for a referendum on a tax of one cent for \$100 worth of taxable property to be used to support a school for teachers. Elias Barbee of Taylor County proposed an amendment to Jackson's amendment striking out the provision for a referendum and Barbee's proposal was approved 47 to 44. An amendment was then proposed to submit the question of repeal of the Transylvania Act to the people for a vote. This was rejected 69 to 21 and the House proceeded to

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<sup>21</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1856-58, Vol. 2, pp. 17-24.

<sup>22</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, Senate Journal, 1858, p. 195.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

repeal the reorganization act of 1856 by a vote of 69 to 22.<sup>24</sup>

Friends of education who had watched the promising beginning of the school were shocked at the action of the legislature. Superintendent Matthews indignantly declared of this action:

It will become memorable in the annals of state legislation for all coming time. It has given a retrograde movement to state education, which cannot be retracted for at least a quarter of a century . . . whilst Southern orators were eloquently and earnestly rallying their people to educate their teachers, in self-defense, Kentucky orators were as loudly inviting foreigners to take possession of their schools--throwing wide open the doors to empirics and adventurers by demolishing their own school for teachers.<sup>25</sup>

He stated:

If the intelligent and independent citizens of Kentucky had been fully possessed of the facts, and thoroughly aware of the interests involved in this school for teachers, they never would have consented to raze this fair and symmetrical structure to the dust. Or had sufficient time been allowed to test the practicability and the outcome of such an institution, they would not have laid violent hands upon it.<sup>26</sup>

After this set-back, it was almost fifteen years before the General Assembly made any provision for teacher training; and it was 50 years before it finally provided for the establishment of two teacher training schools. Meanwhile the superintendents continued to press the issue before each session of the legislature. In his final report to the legislature, Superintendent Matthews said:

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<sup>24</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House Journal, 1858, pp. 274-278.

<sup>25</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1857-58, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 13.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

I cannot part from my respected constituents without hearing my emphatic testimony to the necessity of normal schools. The system of common schools is imperfect and inefficient without such fountains of supply. No independent and self-reliant Commonwealth can dispense with them.<sup>27</sup>

Matthews quoted from the reports of superintendents in other states to show how successful their normal schools were.

In December, 1857, a meeting most significant for the future educational development of Kentucky was held in Louisville.<sup>28</sup> This group which adopted the title of Kentucky Association of Teachers would eventually develop into the most influential education organization in the state. The General Assembly passed an act in 1858 incorporating the Association and granting it a charter. This organization, under various names,<sup>29</sup> became a leading force in the educational development of the state. One of the primary objectives of the Association was the founding of normal <sup>schools</sup> and the increased professionalization of the state's teachers. The founding of normal schools was almost an annual subject for consideration by the Resolutions and Legislative Committees of the Association, and from time to time special committees were also appointed to study the topic and make reports. Over the years the legislative Committee of

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>28</sup>For a history of the KEA see Porter Hopkins, Kentucky Education Association: The First One Hundred Years (Louisville: KEA, 1957).

<sup>29</sup>From 1857 to 1865 it was the Kentucky Association of Teachers; from 1865 to 1873, the State Teacher Association of Kentucky; from 1873 to 1892, the Teachers Association of Kentucky; from 1892 to 1932, the Kentucky Educational Association; and from 1932 to the present, the Kentucky Education Association. Porter Hopkins, op. cit.

The Association would become a powerful and effective force in legislative matters relating to education.

For the next several years the KEA and the superintendents continued to voice the need for state-supported teacher training institutions. In 1864 Superintendent Daniel Stevenson recommended the establishment of one or two state normal schools.<sup>30</sup> When a bill was introduced that year to increase the school fund by raising the tax levy to five cents per one hundred dollars worth of property, an amendment was added in the Senate providing that one half of one percent of the additional tax should be used to establish and sustain a state normal school. The Senate passed the amended bill, but a controversy developed over the amendment in the House and the session ended before any action was taken.<sup>31</sup>

Superintendent Zach F. Smith also had as one of his objectives the establishment of agencies under state control for the preparation of teachers, but he had to settle for much less than he desired. An ever increasing demand for teachers and the almost total absence of any really well-trained ones made it imperative that some arrangement be made to supply the state with competent teachers. A system of local training schools or institutes, taught by lawyers, preachers and school teachers, was organized to offer training courses of two to six weeks each summer at county seats. Superintendent Smith accepted the institutes, but he noted in his report for 1869 that "we shall need regular normal colleges as a second out-growth of

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<sup>30</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 121.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

the school system in due course of time."<sup>32</sup> He saw the institutes as only temporary devices to improve teaching in the absence of normal schools.

In 1870 the teachers institutes were provided for by law, and by 1873 almost every county in the state was conducting an institute. This led to the adoption of the school law in 1888 which made attendance at the institutes compulsory for those intending to teach in the common schools.<sup>33</sup> For several years attendance was quite good, but by 1885 the newness had begun to wear off and much less enthusiasm was being shown in the sessions. Although the institutes were continued for several years, in fact until the mid-1920's, they came to be regarded, at best, as mere substitutes for normal schools. The year after the institutes were established by law, Superintendent H. A. M. Henderson told the legislature, "No system of institutes, however efficiently conducted, can be anything more than partial substitutes."<sup>34</sup> But for lack of better means of training the state's teachers, he encouraged improvement of the institutes and compulsory attendance. At the same time he urged that the state ". . . can and ought to establish one or more normal schools, which shall train for home use a corps of instructors adequate to the demands of the age. . . ."<sup>35</sup> The institutes had a somewhat paradoxical effect on teacher training. They did attract attention to the need for better

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<sup>32</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1869, Vol. 2, No. 18, p. 69.

<sup>33</sup>Kentucky Statutes (1899), C. 113, Art. XII, Sec. 4510.

<sup>34</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1872, Vol. 1, pp. 39-40.

<sup>35</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 122.



and more effective agencies for training teachers, but at the same time, they delayed the adoption of state normal schools by providing an ineffective substitute.

Interest in schools for training teachers continued to grow. In July, 1874, the Society for the Advancement of Education in Kentucky held its first session at Frankfort. Its stated objective was to "concert measures to mature a system of public education that shall extend to the training of teachers."<sup>36</sup>

The same year Superintendent Henderson held a meeting of top educators of the state in his office, and he pressed the need for normals before this group, and in his report for 1876 Henderson noted that the teachers of the state were organizing and rapidly becoming a powerful element in society.<sup>37</sup> The State Teachers Association (KTA) was getting stronger and its membership was growing. At the meeting of the Association in August, 1876, one of the addresses was on normal schools, and before adjournment a resolution was unanimously adopted stating:

. . . we, the teachers of Kentucky in association assembled, bind ourselves to employ every agency we may honorably use to establish at least one State Normal School.<sup>38</sup>

In his report for 1877, Superintendent Henderson said:

That better teachers are desirable, and that Normal Schools are great agents to supply them,

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<sup>36</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>37</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1876, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 6.

<sup>38</sup>Proceedings of the State Teachers' Association printed in Legislative Documents, 1876, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 90.

no one, even partially acquainted with the facts will deny. That all states having a well-developed system of common schools have supplied them as necessary adjuncts is equally uncontestable.<sup>39</sup>

Henderson succeeded in getting the General Assembly to pass an act in April, 1878, authorizing the holding of a normal institute for ten weeks during the summers of 1878 and 1879 in the buildings of the Kentucky Military Institute. Free tuition was allowed one student per county, and any teacher attending the session at KMI for one week was excused from attending the county institute for one year. The first year thirty persons enrolled in the school and the next year forty participated.<sup>40</sup> The purpose of these summer sessions was to demonstrate the value and desirability of creating state teachers colleges. As far as the school itself was concerned it was a success, but it failed in its main objective which was to convince the state legislators that state normal schools were desirable and necessary. After two years the legislature failed to renew provisions for the school at KMI.

In 1880 the state opened its first school for training teachers which remained in continuous operation when the legislature provided for a Normal Department in the state A & M College. But the Normal Department, which opened in 1881, did not prove to be the solution to the teacher problem. H. L. Donovan described the atmosphere of this institution as:

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<sup>39</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1877, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 55.

<sup>40</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 135.

. . . not conducive to develop trained teachers. . . . The professors of this department were not held in high academic esteem by their colleagues; and likewise the students of the Normal Department were, in the common estimate, ranked lower than those in the other colleges. Laboring under such handicaps, the school never attained the influence that it would have under more auspicious circumstances. It failed to reach any considerable number of teachers.<sup>41</sup>

The Normal Department was looked down upon by the other colleges because large numbers of the normal students were doing preparatory work since they were not high school graduates. Another factor may have been that with the opening of the Normal Department, female students were admitted to the college for the first time, and during the 1870's and 1880's co-education was just beginning to make some headway in Kentucky. At their annual meetings in 1876 and 1879 the State Teachers Association heard papers presenting both sides of the argument on co-education. This remained a controversial topic for several years. Because of these factors much of the energy of the Normal Department was spent trying to establish its rights in an indifferent, sometimes hostile atmosphere, and much of its potential was thus lost.<sup>42</sup>

From the beginning, those enrolling in the Normal Department got only a rudimentary course in teacher training. The number of non-professional courses normal students were required to take was much more numerous than the number of professional courses.<sup>43</sup> But

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<sup>41</sup>Herman L. Donovan, A State's Elementary Teacher Training Problem (Nashville: George Peabody College, 1925), p. 17.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.  
<sup>42</sup>See H. L. Donovan, A State's Elementary Teacher Training Problem, pp. 17-18.

<sup>43</sup>James Hopkins, op. cit., p. 209.

any professional training at all was more than most teachers in the common schools possessed at that time.

One of the major problems of the Normal Department was its lack of pupils. In 1888 an investigating committee of the state legislature reported that it found "the Normal Department doing but little because of lack of pupils." This committee flatly declared, the "Normal Department is not a success."<sup>44</sup>

With the Normal Department of the A & M College failing to live up to expectations, the State Superintendents, the State Teachers Association and other friends of education continued to urge further action upon the legislature. During the period from 1880 to 1906, the friends of education were busy promoting the idea of the state's responsibility for training teachers. The ablest educators in the state were busily engaged writing articles and giving public addresses on the subject. Superintendent Henderson had already optimistically stated:

That the state will finally resort to the agency of Normal schools for supplying the districts with competent teachers, no one acquainted with the situation can doubt.

Special schools for the training of teachers is a necessity and the state should proceed at the earliest practicable moment, to establish at least three—one in Eastern, one in Central, and one in Southern Kentucky, whose entire function should be to send forth teachers to the Common Schools.<sup>45</sup>

Henderson's successor, Joseph D. Pickett (1879-1887), said:

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<sup>44</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, Senate Journal, 1887-88, p. 1656.

<sup>45</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1873, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 42.

It is . . . wise for the State to make proper provision for the education of its teachers . . . to provide for the education of the child without providing a proper educator, is poor economy. It is inconsistent.

In the Normal School the state lays the very foundation of self-perpetuation. She opens up the future to her own prosperity.<sup>46</sup>

Steps should be promptly taken by intelligent and enterprising educators and citizens in every section of the Commonwealth to establish effective normal schools for the proper training of teachers for private and for public schools.<sup>47</sup>

During Pickett's term as Superintendent, the State Teacher's Association had a bill introduced which provided for a one-room normal school for whites and one for Negroes in each congressional district. The joint committee on education to which this measure was referred would probably have recommended its passage, but Superintendent Pickett disapproved of the proposal because he did not feel that the institutions provided for would meet the standards necessary for training qualified teachers.<sup>48</sup>

In 1830 Governor Luke P. Blackburn added his plea for Normal Schools when he told the General Assembly:

We must secure a better class of teachers for our Common Schools. In order to do this, we must elevate the standard of scholarship required of them . . . and we must encourage . . . the establishment of effective normal schools

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<sup>46</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1832, p. 244.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>48</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress (Richmond: Eastern Kentucky State College, 1963), p. 34.

under state patronage and state control.<sup>49</sup>

The General Assembly, in spite of all the urging, still declined to establish state normal schools.

Another important source of influence on teacher training in the state was the private normal schools. Like the institutes, they had a paradoxical effect. They helped to pave the way for the normal schools by raising the teaching occupation nearer to the level of a profession; but they also had a negative effect in that some of them were opposed to tax-supported higher education, and some people argued that there was no need for state normals because the private schools could furnish all the teachers needed.

In the years between 1870 and 1906, large numbers of private normal schools were established; in 1880 sixteen private normals were active in the state. Also many of the other private schools added normal departments, but they made few special changes in their curricula. Some of the private schools lasted only a few years; others continued over a period of time and enrolled hundreds, even thousands, of students. One of the most outstanding and best-known private normals was H. H. Cherry's school in Bowling Green. With a few exceptions these private normals gave very little attention to the professional development of teachers, since they were concerned primarily with bestowing enough knowledge to enable the individual to meet state certification requirements. Nonetheless,

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<sup>49</sup>As quoted by Moses Ligon, A History of Public Education in Kentucky (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1942), p. 289.

these private institutions did bring about an increased interest in higher education, and they helped to make the public realize that some qualifications other than a good moral character were necessary for teaching school. They popularized the normal school idea, and they did provide the teachers with training they otherwise would not have had.<sup>50</sup>

It was quite clear to the educators of the state, however, that the private schools did not provide the professional training necessary for competent teachers. Superintendent Henderson said:

A long trial, with the most satisfactory returns, has demonstrated that it is not best to surrender to private enterprise the supplying of our schools with teachers.<sup>51</sup>

To the objection occasionally made (to state normal schools), that existing institutions of learning afford all the agencies to meet the necessities of our young men and ladies desiring to teach, it may be responded that they have not done it; . . .

. . . . .  
Let it be understood that, as special schools are necessary for preparing men for the medical, legal and ministerial professions, they are equally essential to fit teachers for their responsible work.<sup>52</sup>

So the struggle to get the legislature to provide state normal schools continued.

At the 1890 Constitutional Convention a great deal of time was spent discussing the matter of education. H. H. Smith, Hardin

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<sup>50</sup>For a good discussion of private normals, see Travis Smith, op. cit., pp. 150-164.

<sup>51</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1874, No. 1, p. 34.

<sup>52</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1872, Vol. 1, p. 41.

County's delegate said:

. . . this matter appears to many of the Delegates on this floor as a very unimportant subject; but, so far as I am concerned, and many other gentlemen on this floor, to my personal knowledge, there is no subject that is nearer to their hearts than the subject of education.<sup>53</sup>

The friends of higher education at the convention were very much concerned over the fact that the report of the Committee on Education apparently would limit state aid to the common schools unless other assistance were approved in a popular referendum. In a decision handed down in 1874, the Court of Appeals had said that normal schools were not, under law, a part of the common school system and therefore could not be provided for out of the common school fund.<sup>54</sup> Thus the section proposed by the Committee on Education at the convention would prevent the state from establishing normal schools in the future unless they were approved by a vote of the people. The most outspoken advocate of normal schools was William Beckner, delegate from Fayette County who said, ". . . nothing is clearer, or has been more fully demonstrated than that normal schools are necessities where popular education prevails." But he said normal schools, ". . . would not have strength enough before the masses of the people to hope for a favorable result in a popular election."<sup>55</sup> Joining Beckner in his

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<sup>53</sup>Debates of the Constitutional Convention, 1890, p. 4453.

<sup>54</sup>Collins v. Henderson, 11 Bush (Kentucky), 74 (1874).

<sup>55</sup>Debates of the Constitutional Convention, 1890, p. 4476.



plea, C. J. Bronston asked, "What is the value of your common school system unless you can have educated teachers to instruct?"<sup>56</sup> In a last effort to sway the convention, Beckner stated:

The report filed by the Committee will prevent the state from ever establishing a Normal School, which is as necessary for the conduct of a free school system as a school-house or the teacher, and so recognized in all countries on the earth where they have public instruction.<sup>57</sup>

He explained:

It may become necessary to educate the teachers of schools, and for that it will become necessary to have Normal Schools. . . . I say it is better to leave it to the people to manage their own systems of education in the future. They will have to pay for them, and they will understand what the needs of the people are.<sup>58</sup>

Many of the convention delegates were opposed to tax-supported higher education, and they did not share Beckner's conviction that state normal schools were necessary. The attitude of these delegates indicates that the normal school idea still had not taken sufficient hold on the minds of Kentuckians to bear fruit.

W. J. Davidson, Superintendent from 1895 to 1899, in his report for 1895-97 said:

The paramount needs for our common schools may be thus summarized: (a) . . . . (b) an adequate number of Teacher's Normal Training Schools to accommodate young men and women who desire to prepare themselves for teaching. (c) . . . .<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 4499.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 4546.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., p. 4570.

<sup>59</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1896-97, No. 11, p. 24.

Davidson urged that the citizens of the state be permitted to vote on the proposition of establishing normals, an indication that he felt public sentiment by this time was favorable. Still at the turn of the century, in spite of the urging of every superintendent since 1838 and of professional education groups, state normal schools had not been established.

The pleas of the superintendents, the KEA and other educators were not totally in vain, however. Gradually the conception of the state's obligation to train an adequate supply of teachers for its public schools gained support. The political leaders of the day sensed the importance of a trained corps of teachers, and they began to hear faint murmurings of support for state institutions of teacher training.<sup>60</sup> Yet, up until the 1870's the state made no provisions other than the common schools for the education of its teachers. The teachers secured their training wherever and whenever they could, and they were certified to teach on the basis of examinations. For years these certifications were not such as would require any professional training or the establishment of normal schools. But a growing professional consciousness among the teachers of the state was accompanied by greater pressure to standardize and raise the formal requirements for teacher certification. This contributed to the demand for normal schools.<sup>61</sup>

In the 1870's and 1880's the National Normal University at

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<sup>60</sup>Ligon, op. cit., p. 287.

<sup>61</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., p. 125.

Lebanon, Ohio, exerted a powerful influence upon Kentucky, and many outstanding Kentucky educators came back from a season at the Lebanon Normal to take the lead in the state's educational development. Among those who attended the school were R. N. Roark, who headed the Normal Department at the State University and later the Eastern State Normal School; A. W. Mell, the founder of the Southern Normal School which H. H. Cherry later owned and operated and turned over to the state in 1906 to become Western Kentucky State Normal; J. S. Dickey and J. W. Cammack, also leaders in state educational programs.<sup>62</sup> These men and others like them spread their ideas of more professionalization among teachers and special schools for the training of teachers all across the state.

During these years more and more teachers were joining the State Teacher's Association, and under the able leadership of men like R. N. Roark, M. O. Winfrey and H. H. Cherry, its effectiveness increased. The organization became the foremost advocate of educational improvement, and its political influence began to grow. Speaking for the improvement of education, the KEA had an advantage—few public officials, if any, felt secure enough to openly challenge its position. By 1900 not many public officials cared to be on record as being against public education.<sup>63</sup> As the KEA grew it was able to make its influence felt in various ways. It could mobilize considerable grass-roots pressure to influence members of the legis-

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<sup>62</sup>Travis Smith, op. cit., pp. 149-152.

<sup>63</sup>See Knight, op. cit., p. 427.

lature. It maintained close contact with other groups throughout the state who were interested in education and often acted in concert with them. The members of the KEA were quite often prominent and influential in their local communities and were thus able to exert a great deal of leadership on educational matters. And finally, because KEA members had a direct interest in school legislation and were professional educators, they spoke as experts on the matter rather than simply as a group of do-gooders.

The principal obstacles <sup>to</sup> the KEA in achieving its goals in education were the apathy of the people and the limited financial resources of the state. In its first full-scale legislative campaign, its effort to get the General Assembly to create state normal schools, the KEA faced these very problems. The educators chose to fight the inertia and fiscal conservatism in a direct frontal assault, using the newspapers and other means in an attempt to mobilize such overwhelming public support that the demand for normal schools could not be ignored. It was with this campaign that the state's teachers really arrived as a potent organized political force in educational policy. But as an early Superintendent of Public Instruction observed, it was more difficult to secure legislation in Kentucky favorable to education than it was in states whose governments were newly organized.<sup>64</sup> This appeared to be particularly true concerning normal schools because most of the newer states quickly made provisions of some sort for such institutions while Kentucky continued to drag its feet.

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<sup>64</sup>Superintendent Stevenson in the Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of the State Teachers' Association (Frankfort, 1867), p. 12.

H. V. McChesney, Superintendent from 1899 to 1902, made no mention of normal schools in his two reports to the legislature, but interest in the founding of state normals continued to grow during this time. The Southern School Journal, official magazine of the State Teachers' Association, took up the cry. Issues of the magazine carried numerous articles by leading educators and public men in the state explaining the need for normal schools. In an article in the May, 1901, issue the magazine chided:

The public school system of Kentucky has for many decades been treated as a sort of step-child, the politicians subordinating it to almost every other interest. How could we hope for better conditions? The real statesmen of Kentucky seem never to have been able to descend to the consideration of so trifling a question. loftier themes are theirs.<sup>65</sup>

In June of the same year the Journal observed:

The legislature is a servant of the people, the whole people. The liquor interests, the manufacturing interests, the corporate interests usually get such legislation as they desire, while educational interests have an insignificant place in the rear of the procession, merely looking on wistfully while legislation turns gracefully toward those interests that seek it, and are determined to have it.<sup>66</sup>

The article went on to say that if the educational proponents did not act then they should not bewail the fact that the legislature did not give them what they wanted. Along this same line, the July, 1902, issue carried an article by J. A. Sharon, Superintendent of the Paris City Schools, on "The Need of a State Normal School." Sharon said

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<sup>65</sup>Southern School Journal (May, 1901), p. 16.

<sup>66</sup>Southern School Journal (June, 1901), p. 13.

the state would provide a suitable normal school if the teachers of the state would ask for it.<sup>67</sup>

In 1902 Henry Hardin Cherry was elected president of the Kentucky Educational Association, and during his term as head of the state teachers' organization, he continuously urged the group to make the founding of a state normal school its principal legislative goal. Cherry did not see this objective achieved during his term, but his successors continued to push for state normal schools and the movement quickly gained momentum.

At meetings of the KEA and district teachers associations, normal schools were a frequent topic for discussion. For example, at the meeting of the Second District Teachers Association in November, 1903, at Madisonville, Livingstone McCartney, Superintendent of the City Schools of Henderson, read a paper on "The Needs of our Schools," in which he urged the establishment of normal schools. He said the state needed not less than four normal schools for the education of its teachers, and he pointed out the inadequacy of the Normal Department in the State College, saying:

The true spirit of the professional normal school can not possibly flourish under the shadow of an institution where it is kept constantly conscious of its inferior relation to the technical and classical courses of instruction.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>J. A. Sharon, "The Need of a State Normal School," Southern School Journal (July, 1902), p. 7.

<sup>68</sup>Southern School Journal (January, 1904), p. 5.

McCartney maintained that professional schools, having as their sole purpose the training of teachers, should be established.

During the 1904 session of the General Assembly a bill was introduced in the Senate which would have appropriated \$150,000 for buildings and equipment at the State College. Amendments were attached to the bill reducing the total to \$75,000 and providing that at least \$25,000 of this be used for a building for the Normal Department. The bill was passed 30 to 1 in the Senate and was sent to the House. The House amended the bill to provide for the appropriation of \$25,000 only to be used exclusively for the building and equipping of a separate building for the Normal Department. This version passed the House 60 to 13, and was sent to the Senate which concurred 28 to 0.<sup>69</sup> R. N. Roark, head of the Normal Department of the State College, appeared before the legislature to encourage them to provide this money for his department, and he was reprimanded for his efforts by the College's Board of Trustees. The College officials did not want the various departments vying with one another before the state legislature for appropriations.<sup>70</sup> In the light of the College's position and because of his concern with trimming the state budget, Governor Beckham vetoed this bill.

The State College was immediately criticized by the Kentucky Educational Association for its alleged inadequate support of the Normal Department. President James Patterson brushed this off as

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<sup>69</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House and Senate Journals, 1904, p. 1173.

<sup>70</sup>James Hopkins, op. cit., p. 214.

coming from those he called "Normal School men."<sup>71</sup> He said he prevented similar action in various county teachers' institutes.

In an editorial in the April, 1904, issue, the Southern School Journal asserted:

The teachers of Kentucky never had such an opportunity! It is a fact well known to all who are at all acquainted with the temper of the last legislature that there was in that body a strong sentiment in favor of two state normal schools for Kentucky, one for the eastern and another for the western portion of the state. The only bill of this nature the legislature had an opportunity to vote on was the one carrying an appropriation of \$25,000 for a separate building for the Normal Department of the State College. This bill passed both the Senate and House almost unanimously; although the bill was vetoed by Governor Beckham; it shows conclusively the sentiment of the General Assembly.<sup>72</sup>

The writer of the editorial went on to say that the greatest educational task before the state at the present time was the proper training of teachers. The present facilities, he maintained, were entirely inadequate. The editorialist also pointed out that there was a growing sentiment for the establishment and maintenance of two independent teacher training institutions, and he concluded:

. . . if the teachers of Kentucky will only join hands and begin work now, they can be had when the legislature meets again. . . . The teachers of Kentucky can have these institutions in little more than two years if they will organize, work, and lead the people to see with them.<sup>73</sup>

To this end the Southern School Journal and the Southern Independent

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Southern School Journal (April, 1904), p. 12.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., p. 13.



pledged their support for the next two years. In the June, 1904, issue the Journal continued in the same vein, stating:

Two state normal schools for Kentucky should be the battle cry of Kentucky teachers for the next two years. The people of Kentucky will provide them if the real need for them can be shown.<sup>74</sup>

In 1904 the teachers of the state, after 65 years of fruitless marching to the General Assembly with their hats in their hands, finally took a determined and effective step toward developing sufficient public sentiment to force the General Assembly to take some action. When the Kentucky Educational Association assembled in Maysville in June, 1904, its members were determined to do something. Educational progress in the state was at a standstill, and somehow the people had to be awakened to this educational stagnation and shown the means for improving the system. With this objective in mind, the convention adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, the need of well-trained teachers in our schools is more pressingly felt every year throughout the state; and,

Whereas, Kentucky is behind in her provision made for the training of teachers as shown by the last Census Report of the Commissioner of Education wherein it appears that for example, Missouri has three state normal schools for white; Tennessee, 1; West Virginia, 6; Virginia, 2; Florida, 2; Alabama, 4; all of them well-housed and equipped and strongly supported, while Kentucky has none except an inadequately equipped and parsimoniously supported department in the State College; therefore, be it,

Resolved, that we seek legislation from the next General Assembly which shall establish one or more high grade state normal schools well housed and

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<sup>74</sup>Southern School Journal (June, 1904), p. 12.

well equipped for adequately preparing teachers for all grades of schools and for any position from the rural schools to a city superintendency.

Be it further resolved, that we pledge ourselves to exert our influence through institutes, associations, and individual effort to secure such legislation from the next General Assembly.<sup>75</sup>

After the adoption of this resolution, the president of the Association was directed to appoint a committee which was to begin at once to develop an organization which was to reach every part of the state and whose objective was the creation of public sentiment in favor of normal school legislation. President M. H. Bourne appointed the following committee for this purpose; H. O. Winfrey of Middlesboro, chairman; E. H. Mark of Louisville and J. A. Sharon of Paris. They were to report to the Association at its annual meeting to be held at Mammoth Cave in June, 1905.<sup>76</sup>

Apparently the KEA set to work at once, for the September, 1904, issue of the Southern School Journal reported that the question of state normal schools had taken a firm hold on the minds of educators throughout the state. It said that in almost every teachers' institute this question was raised and discussed, and teachers everywhere had spoken in favor of the schools.<sup>77</sup> The Journal once again expressed its support, maintaining that the only way to meet the demand for more teachers was to induce the state to provide normal schools. Pennsylvania, said the Journal, has thirteen state normal schools,

<sup>75</sup>As quoted in the Southern School Journal (August, 1904), pp. 12-13.

<sup>76</sup>Hamlett, op. cit. p. 232.

<sup>77</sup>Southern School Journal (September, 1904), p. 13.

and nothing in that state is doing more to promote the great interests of education among the masses. Let Kentucky profit from the experience of other states.<sup>78</sup> In the issue for December, 1904, this same argument was pursued further when an item from the Minnesota School Journal concerning normal schools was printed and the question asked: "If Minnesota can afford to thus invest money in her teaching corps, why not Kentucky?"<sup>79</sup> The December issue went on to note agitation for three normal schools and said the three sections of our state are distinctive. Eastern, Central and Western Kentucky each need a normal school. These schools should be located in the cities or towns within the respective divisions of the state which possess the culture requisite of a college town. Educators and the people are becoming more and more interested, reported the Journal.<sup>80</sup>

In the Journal of February, 1905, E. B. Ruffington, Superintendent of the schools in Falmouth, wrote, "The crying need of this state is state normal schools."<sup>81</sup> He called for two or three schools instead of one. He went on to note that it was a matter of deep regret that one of the oldest states in the union should be so far behind her sister states in this important educational feature.<sup>82</sup>

The April, 1905, issue of the Journal once again turned attention to the need for three schools:

We should remember that nature has marked off our

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Southern School Journal (December, 1904), p. 12.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>81</sup>Southern School Journal (February, 1905), p. 8.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

state into three pretty well defined divisions, viz.: Eastern Kentucky, Central Kentucky and Western Kentucky. . . . Our state is divided into three parts, and these parts differ much in institutions, customs, and traditions. For geographical and topographical reasons we cannot have fewer than three state normal schools if we have any at all; this is equally true for political reasons. No bill favoring one of these sections with a normal school to the exclusion of the other two can be carried in the legislature. For these reasons and others, there must be three state normal schools in Kentucky, . . .<sup>83</sup>

The article went on in an attempt to head off other criticisms of the normal schools proposal. It observed:

. . . it has been said that as soon as such institutions are authorized by law, the politicians of the State will take control of them and practice the well-known arts of political spoilsmen in supplying them with heads, and faculties, and none but those who can show "party service" and party fealty need apply.

In reply to these charges, the author said:

If the people permit these things, they will no doubt happen but they should not, and in all probability will not.

For the heads of state normal schools, as well as places in their faculties, men should be chosen for reasons of attainment and character. This being true, we cannot believe that, in the two great political parties about equal in numbers and a people eminently fair and just as regards matters of public policy, this form of favoritism can find a permanent place in the management of State Normal schools.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Southern School Journal (April, 1905), p. 8.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24.

Noting that discussion on the issue "waxes warm" the Journal made some effort to allay any apprehensions on the part of the state university assuring it that no one wanted to reduce its funds; and urging that the university should aspire to its own large field of legitimate endeavor and should not want to "dabble" in managing the work of the state normal schools. Optimistically the Journal went on to predict that the state college would want nothing to do with the normal schools.<sup>85</sup>

In April, 1905, at the request of Superintendent of Public Instruction James H. Fuqua, a large number of citizens interested in education met at Frankfort to consider ways of improving the system, and in particular, how to obtain normal schools. This meeting authorized the appointment of a committee which was to work closely with the committee appointed by the KEA at Maysville. E. H. Cherry, president of Southern Normal, was appointed as a member of this committee along with Dr. E. E. Hume of Frankfort, chairman; Dr. Burris Jenkins, President of Transylvania College in Lexington, Dr. F. W. Minitt of Danville, James K. Patterson, president of the State College, Lexington; and James Fuqua, State Superintendent of Frankfort. The committee was told to proceed with vigor in forming an educational organization embracing both educators and private citizens.<sup>86</sup>

When the Kentucky Educational Association held its annual meeting at Mammoth Cave in June, 1905, state normal schools were the para-

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 282.

mount issue. M. O. Winfrey, president of the KEA, and other educators had already toured the state stirring up interest in the Mammoth Cave meeting and booming normal schools. The Glasgow Times reported:

Educators throughout the Commonwealth are unanimous in declaring that the time has come when at least three normal schools are necessary for the maintenance of the school system of Kentucky on a plane commensurate with the advancement and progress of modern affairs.<sup>87</sup>

The Committee appointed at the Frankfort meeting and the one named earlier at Maysville met in joint conference at Mammoth Cave, and out of their deliberations came the Kentucky Educational Improvement Commission. This Commission was composed of: A State Campaign Committee of thirty-three members—three members from each congressional district to serve for one year, in most cases two outstanding laymen and one educator;<sup>88</sup> an Executive Committee of five members to be selected by the KEA for terms of three years; and an Administrative Council to consist of a president, a secretary and a treasurer. M. O. Winfrey was chosen to fill the positions of president and secretary, and E. R. James was selected as treasurer.<sup>89</sup>

The members of the State Campaign Committee were assigned the following duties: (1) to cooperate with all influences in their respective districts to aid in the development of a more wholesome

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<sup>87</sup>Glasgow Times, May 26, 1905.

<sup>88</sup>See Appendix A for the names of the members from each district.

<sup>89</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 282-283.

educational sentiment among the public; (2) to visit and address educational associations and teachers' institutes throughout the state; (3) to aid in the distribution of educational literature; and (4) to collect funds in their respective districts for the use of the Commission in all matters pertaining to educational conditions.<sup>90</sup>

Appointed as members of the Executive Committee were H. H. Cherry, E. E. Hume, E. H. Mark, J. H. Fuqua and J. A. Sharon. This committee was given charge of all funds and was authorized to act as legislative committee to appear before the General Assembly on behalf of legislation in the interest of educational improvement. At its first meeting the Executive Committee decided that no really effective reform could be brought about except through the state's teachers, and for this reason they decided to make their first fight for professional schools for teachers.<sup>91</sup>

With this organization of the Educational Improvement Commission the KEA launched one of the most effective and most significant campaigns for the improvement of education that was ever conducted in the state. An article in the Glasgow Times explained why the Educational Improvement Commission was formed in these words:

We find that Kentucky is one of the two states of the Union that does not maintain a system of state normal schools; . . . that there are only three states in the Union that show a greater percentage of ignorance among their white population; . . . that our state is not keeping pace with the other states of the South in the great

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<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 233.

educational wave that is sweeping the country;  
 . . . and that public sentiment on educational  
 matters is at a very low ebb and needs arousing.<sup>92</sup>

Never before in the history of the state had so large a group been lined up in a concentrated effort for educational improvement, and never before had such an imposing array of educational leaders and statesmen been brought together on this issue. Speaking of the Mammoth Cave convention, the Frankfort Roundabout said:

One of the many visible results of this great meeting is that all the teachers and thousands of citizens are thoroughly alive to the importance of having established Independent State Normal Schools. Kentucky being away behind her sister states in this particular.<sup>93</sup>

The Glasgow Times reported:

So great is the ardor of the teachers of Kentucky for the establishment of these schools that each teacher, a member of KEA, has donated a small percent of his or her salary to assist in the work of the movement.<sup>94</sup>

The paper said the next legislature would be assailed by a formidable army already at work on the state legislators.

Between June, 1905, and January, 1906, considerable work was done by the educational forces. Agencies and devices of various types were enlisted to familiarize the public with the state's educational needs and to promote interest in the desired changes. One of the first steps taken was the distribution of literature showing that the State was behind in education when compared with other states of the

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<sup>92</sup>Glasgow Times, May 26, 1905.

<sup>93</sup>Frankfort Roundabout, July 8, 1905.

<sup>94</sup>Glasgow Times, May 26, 1905.



union. The EIC circulated statistics showing that all of Kentucky's neighbor states had a lower percentage of illiteracy among their native white citizens, and emphasized the fact that only North Carolina, Louisiana and the Territory of New Mexico had an illiteracy rate among native white citizens higher than Kentucky's 14.3% in 1900. The Commission also pointed out that Kentucky appropriated less money than any of her neighbors for the training of public school teachers and called attention to the fact that whereas Japan had 90% of her school age children in attendance, Kentucky in 1903 had less than 50% in attendance. There ~~are~~<sup>were</sup>, normal advocates pointed out, over 100,000 children over ten years of age in Kentucky who ~~cannot~~<sup>could</sup> read the word of God.<sup>95</sup>

The EIC appealed to the pride of the state's citizens, pointing out that ~~it~~<sup>Kentucky</sup> was up-to-date in most things but behind educationally. The Commission's motto was "Kentucky for Kentuckians," and it urged, let's educate our citizens so they and not Northern and Eastern capitalists will develop the state's resources. The Commission asked, "Are you content to know that Kentucky drags behind all the other States and Territories in this matter?"<sup>96</sup> "It behooves every Southern state that inaugurates an educational campaign in favor of better schools," said the Commission, "to inaugurate at the same time some

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<sup>95</sup>These figures are from an article prepared by the Educational Improvement Commission, copy in Cherry's Scrapbook for 1906-1907, Kentucky Building Library, Bowling Green, Kentucky. This account of the EIC's campaign is based on articles in various newspapers including the Courier-Journal, Frankfort Roundabout and Glasgow Times.

<sup>96</sup>Clipping in H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook for 1906-1907, Kentucky Building Library, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

movement that will provide for the better training of teachers. The untrained teacher is the most expensive part of our present educational system."<sup>97</sup>

The Commission also pitched much of its campaign toward the rural elements in the state. In one of its articles it stated that the rural schools were just as entitled to good teachers as the city schools. It asked, "Are you willing to deny longer the country boys and girls the privilege of trained teachers? Are you satisfied to know that hundreds of thousands of good, honest country folk are unfavorably inclined toward education for the simple reason that they have never had a trained leader, but instead, have generally had unskilled teachers and miserably poor schools? Do you not believe it is a part of patriotism to alter these conditions?"<sup>98</sup>

In another article carried by several papers in the state the EIC stated:

There are in Kentucky today a thousand schools without teachers; there are thousands of schools being taught by untrained teachers; and there are hundreds of thousands of children growing up in ignorance and vice without attending any school what ever. The crying need of our state today is a sufficient corps of Nonnally Trained teachers. At present, almost any person of good moral character and a certificate may be put in charge of the training of children, although he would not be considered competent to train a bird-dog or a colt. To train these valuable animals requires special training and a practical knowledge of their nature and characteristics, as well as the methods best adapted to their development and training. . . .

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<sup>97</sup>Glasgow Times, December 12, 1905.

<sup>98</sup>H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook, 1906-1907, Kentucky Building Library.

The Commission went on to say:

How long will the pride of Kentuckians remain dormant in the matter of education? How long will we allow the mass of our growing citizens to remain deaf, dumb and blind to the best there is in life? How long will we withhold the best educational advantages from the country people, just because trained teachers cost more than untrained teachers?<sup>99</sup>

One of the biggest obstacles the Improvement Commission faced was the widespread idea that teachers were "born not made," and the resultant feeling that a study of subject matter without any study of teaching methods was quite sufficient training for teachers.

Contributing to this problem was the fact that many of the early normal schools were little more than high schools under a different name which provided little in the way of special training for teachers. Add to this the fact that there were no accrediting institutions, and the private normals in several instances became "diploma mills" which were inferior to other private colleges educationally. These factors resulted in a bad reputation for normal schools in general and their denunciation by many of the best schools and educators in the country. Consequently the normal schools became separated from the mainstream of liberal education and for years were the "social outcasts" of our educational system. Only now are these institutions which have in recent years become state colleges and universities making their way back into the mainstream, and still many of the old, longer-established liberal arts institutions are inclined to look down their noses at these "newcomers."

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<sup>99</sup>Glasgow Times, November 17, 1905.

In ~~his~~<sup>its</sup> campaign, the Commission noted, "We shall have trained teachers as soon as the people awaken to the fact that to make our Common Schools efficient . . . those who teach our schools must be trained in the profession of teaching as well as educated in the branches to be taught."<sup>100</sup> Much time and effort was devoted to getting this concept across to the masses.

Large amounts of educational literature were collected and distributed to every corner of the state. Laymen and teachers alike were busy writing and speaking. Corps of speakers were sent throughout the state to talk to the public about normal schools. The press was enlisted in the cause, and the Commission furnished nearly 200 newspapers with educational articles each week. Some papers set aside one or two columns for school news exclusively. The teachers throughout the state were urged to enlist the editor of their hometown paper in "the war against local ignorance and indifference as to educational matters."<sup>101</sup> On the whole, press coverage was most favorable to the normal school cause. For example, the Frankfort Roundabout for July 8, 1905, had this to say:

We believe that nothing will add more to the efficiency of our public schools than good training schools for teachers and we sincerely trust that every citizen may feel it to be his duty to lend every possible assistance to the very laudable work of the Educational Improvement Commission of Kentucky.<sup>102</sup>

Noting that pockets of illiteracy in the state were the result of an

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<sup>100</sup>Taken from a news clipping (exact source not shown) in H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook, 1905-1907, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>101</sup>Southern School Journal (October, 1905), p. 24.

<sup>102</sup>Frankfort Roundabout, July 8, 1905.

insufficient supply of qualified teachers, the Louisville Courier-Journal, the largest and most influential paper in the state, wrote:

It is to meet this great necessity that we need these State normal colleges. Teaching is a profession requiring technical education for it, as in other learned professions, and the State cannot be too prompt in providing such education.<sup>103</sup>

Not all the papers of the state were as enthusiastic in their support of course. The Winchester Democrat, published in the hometown of Wesleyan College, a private church school, for example warned:

We believe they are needed and will help the school system, but they are not likely to prove a panacea for our educational troubles. . . . Let us have the Normal Schools, but let us not expect too much from them.<sup>104</sup>

The Lexington Leader carried an article in which it quoted an educational leader in the state as saying that it was almost a safe presumption or a settled fact that there would be no independent normal school in Kentucky outside the one already existing at the State College.

The Leader reported other educators as sharing this view, and said it appeared that the state administration looked upon the normal school movement with disapproval. Its strongest argument was that the movement would weaken the State College and it urged the readers, "stand by State College and you stand by Lexington."<sup>105</sup> So there were a few papers opposed to the normal schools, but not so many that the Commission could not say in one of its articles that "The attitude of the press is especially gratifying."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup>Courier-Journal, February 8, 1906.

<sup>104</sup>Winchester Democrat, March 13, 1906.

<sup>105</sup>Lexington Leader as quoted in the Southern School Journal, August, 1905, p. 23.

<sup>106</sup>Frankfort Roundabout, January 6, 1906.

The service rendered by the Southern School Journal merits special mention. For several months before the state's teachers were scheduled to assemble at Mammoth Cave, the Journal carried pictures and articles about public normals that were located in other states. This information, especially that from the neighboring states of Indiana and Illinois, aroused great interest in the subject. By the time the convention met, normal schools were a paramount issue in the minds of a vast number of the teachers and educators.

Judge W. M. Beckner of Winchester and Judge H. C. Saufley of Stanford wrote particularly effective articles on normal schools which appeared in the Southern School Journal. Both men were well known in state political circles, and Beckner's interpretation of Section 183 of the state constitution dealing with the School Fund was placed on the desk of each legislator in the 1906 session of the General Assembly.<sup>107</sup> In his article Beckner wrote:

The General Assembly meets next winter, and let every friend of education do what he can to impress on its members the supreme importance of such a system of normal schools in Kentucky as will give full opportunity for the training of teachers qualified to furnish our children with the education which the times require of those who hope to succeed in this age of struggle and fierce competition.<sup>108</sup>

Superintendent James Fuqua included Beckner's entire article in his 1905 report to the General Assembly. Over half the pages of the December, 1905, issue of the Journal were devoted to the need for

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<sup>107</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p. 3.

<sup>108</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1904-05, Vol. 4, p. 36.

state normal schools. There can be no doubt but that the efforts of the magazine helped to build up interest in this issue.

After the schools were established, the Eastern Kentucky Review published by the Eastern State Normal School stated:

The State Normal is grateful to the Southern School Journal for the aggressive work done for the Normal Schools. No force in the state has contributed more to the establishment and the success of the institutions than this able exponent of universal education.<sup>109</sup>

The task undertaken by the educational forces required considerable funds. These funds were raised through voluntary contributions. The Roundabout reported that over \$600 was contributed at the Mammoth Cave meeting, and soon afterward the county teachers associations began to make contributions. Nine counties--Harren, Barren, Monroe, Mercer, Elliott, Rowan, Owen, Pike and Washington--gave a total of \$1,058, and during a tri-county institute at Frankfort, \$350 was raised.<sup>110</sup> This gives some indication that the teachers were firmly behind this movement.

During the months following the Mammoth Cave convention, the educational forces were busy conducting a vigorous campaign reaching all parts of the state on behalf of normal schools. The results were far-reaching, and widespread interest was developed. The people became so aroused on the subject that education and normal schools became an issue in the election of 1905.<sup>111</sup> According to proponents,

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<sup>109</sup>As quoted in the State Normal Bulletin (February, 1907), p. 8.

<sup>110</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p.

<sup>111</sup>Ligon, op. cit., p. 291.

only those guilty of the most selfish individualism were opposed to the cause; to repudiate the public schools was to repudiate democracy.

In August, 1905, the Journal reported the EIC was making considerable headway in raising money but noted that the Commission's purposes and methods were not clearly understood in many places. The Journal said the following questions were being raised every day and should be answered:

1. For what is the money now being raised to be used?
2. Upon whose authority is the money to be paid out?
3. Who is responsible for dispensing the money?
4. Does the Commission pay those raising money for it?
5. Is there anything political in the work of the Commission?

The Journal promised it would do all it could to help the Commission answer such questions.<sup>112</sup>

On December 16, 1905, the officers and Executive Committee of the Educational Improvement Commission met in the Capitol Hotel in Frankfort and in an all-day session mapped out their campaign strategy. They drew up petitions which were mailed to about 8,000 teachers and friends of education in the state who were in turn to interview citizens, get their feelings on the issue, and if possible, their signatures on a petition.<sup>113</sup> These petitions were to be circulated and returned as soon as possible so they could be presented to the legislature when it convened. The petition asked for:

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<sup>112</sup>Southern School Journal (August, 1905), p. 22.

<sup>113</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p. 4.



The establishment and maintenance of an efficient system of State Normal Schools, . . . for the specific purpose of giving such training to the common school teachers of Kentucky as will enable them to make those schools efficient; thus giving to all the children of the "Great Common People" educational advantages in keeping with that of the other states of the South and West, and at the same time enhancing the peace, dignity, and prosperity of this Commonwealth.<sup>114</sup>

In an article prepared for the newspapers, the Commission stated:

The legislature will be in session this winter. Are you content to know that Kentucky drags behind all the other states and territories in this matter? Are you willing to longer deny to the country boys and girls the privilege of trained teachers? . . . write to your Senator and your Representative and tell them of your convictions. . . . The people should express themselves to the lawmakers.<sup>115</sup>

In the light of the strong sentiment developing in favor of normal schools, Superintendent Fuqua, in his report to the legislature for 1903-1905, said:

I call the attention of the General Assembly to a need that is absolutely essential to the progress and success of our schools, without which all our efforts to improve our schools will be in vain. We must have one or more first class normal schools in which teachers may be thoroughly trained for their work free of tuition.<sup>116</sup>

He noted that Kentucky was behind every other state in this respect and pleaded, "It behooves her to arouse from her lethargy and furnish adequate means to equip and train her teachers and make them

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<sup>114</sup>As quoted in the Southern School Journal (December, 1905), pp. 29-30.

<sup>115</sup>Frankfort Roundabout, January 6, 1906.

<sup>116</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1904-05, Vol. 4, p. 32.

equal to the best."<sup>117</sup>

In spite of the strong sentiment on the normal issue, Governor J. C. W. Beckham approached the subject rather cautiously in his message to the General Assembly. He told the legislators:

The question of establishing normal schools will be seriously pressed upon your attention, but to do so the money would have to come out of the school fund, for there are no other means available for such a purpose. If they can be established without seriously trespassing upon the school fund, then I believe it would be a good idea to do so.<sup>118</sup>

Meanwhile the Educational Improvement Commission continued to push for legislation establishing normal schools, and sentiment favoring such schools was growing among the masses. The reports of the county superintendents are somewhat of an index to public opinion, and in their reports to Superintendent Fuqua in 1905, an overwhelming majority of them expressed themselves as favoring normal schools. George Vaughn, Superintendent of Webster County schools, stated:

I heartily approve the move now being made to establish these schools, and think that we should have at least two in our state so located as to be accessible to the teachers of each end of the state.<sup>119</sup>

Nellie B. Clay, Superintendent of the Bourbon County schools, said:

The need of normal schools or a normal school is the greatest educational need that Kentucky has. . . . The demand for the training school for teachers is greater in Kentucky than it ever was and I trust that our next General Assembly will do its duty in this matter.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

<sup>118</sup>As quoted in Eastern Kentucky State College's Three Decades of Progress, p. 4.

<sup>119</sup>Kentucky Public Documents, Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1903-05, p. 252.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

Z. A. Bennett, Livingston County Superintendent, was even more emphatic, saying, "Kentucky is in great need of normal training schools, and we have not the least excuse for not having them."<sup>121</sup> W. H. Henderson, Lewis County, observed, "The more training schools established for the teachers, the better equipped they will be for their work."<sup>122</sup> Henry H. Walker, Mercer County, reported, "Our teachers are very enthusiastic in the support of efforts to secure state normal schools, and have contributed liberally to the State Improvement Commission."<sup>123</sup> S. J. Billington, Superintendent of McCracken County schools, said, "We must have state institutions for the training of our teachers. . . . Till this is done we cannot hope to elevate the standard of education in the state."<sup>124</sup> R. L. Allen, Daviess County, noted, "Kentucky is sadly in need of training schools for her teachers. We need at least three, and the next legislature ought to establish them. . . ."<sup>125</sup> Cora Stewart, Rowan County Superintendent, who formed the famous "moonlight schools" a few years later, reported:

There is an overwhelming sentiment in Rowan County in favor of one or more State Normals, and every teacher has contributed his mite to the fund, in order that the Kentucky Educational Improvement Commission may be able to do its work more effectively.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

Not all the superintendents were this enthusiastic of course. Several of them made no mention of normal schools in their reports, and others endorsed them with some reservations. W. W. White, Superintendent of the Campbell County schools, was in favor of normal schools, but favored private schools over state schools.<sup>127</sup> C. C. Adams, Grant County Superintendent, favored normal schools but felt that they should be deferred until teachers were better paid.<sup>128</sup> Not a single superintendent expressed himself as totally opposed to normal schools.

These comments from the county superintendents scattered throughout the state give some indication of the widespread support the normal movement had gained among the state's educators. As a result of the campaign of the EIC, many persons who before were indifferent now became energetic proponents of state normal schools. Not only teachers and educators, but politicians and ordinary citizens became active in the drive for these institutions. By the time the legislature convened in January, 1906, there was an overwhelming sentiment in favor of normal school legislation. Victor Hugo once said there was one thing stronger than all the armies in the world--an idea whose time had come. It appeared that the time of the normal school idea had finally come in Kentucky.

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<sup>127</sup>Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., p. 208.

## CHAPTER IV

### Founding the Normal Schools

By the time the General Assembly convened in Frankfort in January, 1906, it was evident that the intensive campaign of the educational forces had had its effect. The members of the legislature were actively interested in school legislation, and they were in a mood receptive to the recommendations of the schoolmen. The school forces were there eager to present their recommendations--as they had been for the last seventy years--but this time a bit more determined to press their cause. The officers and the executive committee of the Educational Improvement Commission remained in Frankfort throughout the legislative session and worked to advance educational legislation, especially the normal school bill.<sup>1</sup>

The political situation was probably more favorable to the passage of domestic legislation at this time than it had been at any time during the previous decade.

For a time after the assassination of Goebel, the state was on the verge of civil war, and the hatred and bitterness of the Goebel episode would plague state politics for years. But J. C. W. Beckham proved to be an able young executive, and he quickly set about the task of peacemaking. Only 30 years of age when he assumed the governorship, and although not particularly brilliant nor aggressive,

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<sup>1</sup>Probably the best available account on the campaign before the General Assembly is found in Eastern Kentucky State College's Three Decades of Progress. Also helpful are issues of the Courier-Journal and the Southern School Journal for 1906.

Beckham did have character and ability. He was born August 5, 1869, at "Wickland" in Bardstown, Kentucky. The son of William N. and Julia Wickliffe Beckham, he was the grandson of former governor Charles A. Wickliffe. Beckham was educated at Roseland Academy of Bardstown and Central University in Richmond, Kentucky. In 1888 he served as principal of the Bardstown Public Schools. In 1894 Beckham was elected as State Representative, and in 1898 he served as Speaker of the House of Representatives. He was a likeable man and he enjoyed a great deal of personal and political popularity. George Willis says that Beckham had a fortunate tendency to surround himself with loyal, clean, young politicians who intuitively knew how to play the game.<sup>2</sup>

In 1900 Beckham was elected to serve out the remainder of Gostel's unexpired term, and then in 1903 he was re-elected to a term of his own. Except for the Tobacco War<sup>3</sup> and the bloody Hargis-Cockrill feud

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<sup>2</sup>George L. Willis, Kentucky Democracy, 3 Vols. (Louisville: Democratic Historical Society, 1935), p. 415.

<sup>3</sup>By the 1890's the tobacco industry had grown to such proportions in Kentucky, especially in the western portion of the state, that there was one or more processing plants in every large town or city. In many of these communities the local tobacco men were the capitalists. For generations tobacco had been the one crop from which the people of the region made their money. A general failure of the tobacco crop or any sharp reduction in its market meant general disaster. In the 1890's the prices the farmers received for their tobacco began to drop, and at the same time their production costs were increased. These changes took place rather suddenly and by 1900 complaints about low prices were rather general. About this time, it was discovered that most of the dark tobacco--the predominant type produced in Western Kentucky rather than the lighter hued burley--was being purchased by three companies: American, Imperial (British) and Regie (Continental Europe). In the years between 1900 and 1905, these three companies swept or bought virtually all opposition out of their way. Nineteen hundred and five witnessed the beginning of three years of warfare by the tobacco farmers against the combines, their agents, and those growers who refused to join the tobacco asso-

in Breathitt County, Beckham's eight years in office were a time of relative peace and prosperity for the state. By January, 1906, good order had been restored, and although there were still rifts within the Democratic party, the political atmosphere was decidedly better than at any time during the past ten years. Consequently the General Assembly was in a much better mood than in previous sessions to take constructive action on such matters as education.

On January 9, Richard W. Miller, Representative from Madison County, introduced a bill providing for the establishment of three normal schools, each to receive \$50,000 for grounds, buildings and equipment, and \$25,000 for salaries and other expenses. The bill divided the state into three districts, naming the counties in each and allowing the board of regents for each school to decide upon its location within the district. Miller's proposal became H. B. 112 and was referred to the Committee on Education, Number 1. No sooner was the bill referred to the Committee on Education than objections to its passage were raised on the grounds of economy. A recent decision of the Court of Appeals had reduced the state's sources of

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ciations organized by the farmers to battle the trusts and improve prices. The Association members became known as the Night Riders; those refusing to join were the Hill Billies. The Night Riders were so-called because of their nighttime activities of scraping the plantbeds and terrorizing the families of the farmers who refused to join and cooperate with the association. For accounts of the Tobacco War see James O. Hall, The Tobacco Night Riders of Kentucky and Tennessee (Louisville: Standard Press, 1939) and John Miller, The Black Patch War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936).

revenue, and it appeared that an additional \$250,000 would be necessary to complete the new capitol building already under construction. So, it was felt that the normal school bill would call for the expenditure of more money than the General Assembly should provide at this time.<sup>4</sup>

In the light of these objections, the Executive Committee of the EIC decided to ask for only one normal school at this time. Sentiment for only one normal school developed rapidly, and Bowling Green appeared to have the inside track as the site for the single school. But before the legislature had convened, the city of Richmond had expected to get one of the three proposed normals, and Richmond now became Bowling Green's arch rival for the single school. Since H. H. Cherry, owner and operator of the Southern Normal School, and his Bowling Green supporters would not agree to Richmond's getting the one school, Richmond interests threatened to go to the floor of the House and fight for the school.<sup>5</sup> The political set-up in Frankfort was somewhat more favorable to Bowling Green because natives of that city such as Henry B. Hines, State Inspector, who took an active interest in the normal school legislation and pushed for two schools; Dr. J. N. McCormack, Secretary of the State Board of Health, a powerful lobbying organization; and Lewis McQuown, Chairman of the Democratic State Central and Executive Committee, were close friends and advisors of Governor Beckham, and had a great deal of influence in his administration. These men were interested in having the state

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<sup>4</sup>See Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



normal school located in their part of the state and if possible in their hometown. This would put them in good standing with constituents in Southern Kentucky.

Realizing Bowling Green's advantage, Miller, the sponsor of the normal bill and a graduate of Central University formerly located in Richmond, soon became anxious over the fate of his proposal and especially the possibility that only one school would be established and located at Bowling Green. Others in Madison County shared Miller's fears, and he was soon joined in Frankfort by Judge Jere A. Sullivan and W. Rhodes Shackelford, two other graduates of Central University. This triumvirate set out determinedly to have the normal school, if the legislature provided for only one, located in Richmond. While Sullivan turned his attention to preparing a new bill to replace the one introduced by Miller, his colleague, Shackelford, was busy lobbying among the legislators to get Richmond chosen as the site for the school.<sup>6</sup>

The Richmond Commercial Club also was interested in this matter, and soon after the normal school issue came before the legislature, the Club launched efforts to get the free donation of the old Central University plant and grounds for a state normal school. On January 25, the Club called a mass meeting of citizens at the Madison County courthouse for the purpose of arousing public interest in securing the location of the state normal school in Richmond. A committee was appointed to go to Frankfort and boom Richmond as the best site for

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

the school.<sup>7</sup> Shortly Mayor Clarence Woods went to Frankfort taking along scores of pictures to convince the legislature that the normal school should be located in this city. All of these materials were placed on a wall of the Capitol Hotel under the caption: "What Richmond Offers Free of Cost to the State for a Normal School." Mayor Woods claimed, "The completeness of the display, its eloquent appeal, and the total absence of any such spectacular display from Bowling Green, spoke vastly more powerfully than all . . . the handbills distributed by . . . Richmond's rivals."<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile under the vigorous leadership of H. H. Cherry, the Bowling Green forces were equally busy trying to convince the legislature that the normal school should be located in their city. The Southern Normal School and Business University, although a private institution, had never opposed public education as had some of the private schools. In fact most of its graduates believed in free public education and in the importance of teaching as a profession. On the other hand, the founding of a state normal school was not a conscious objective of the Southern Normal, at least not during its early development. But when the drive for the establishment of state normals was launched the Southern Normal and its president, H. H. Cherry, immediately took up the cause.

As early as August 15, 1904, a new corporation was formed to manage the Bowling Green Business University. Cornette says the formation of this group was designed to indicate the public service

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

the institution was performing, and probably was intended to prepare the way for having the Southern Normal made into a state normal school.<sup>9</sup> The faculty and alumni of the school worked hard for the establishment of state normals and for the location of one of the schools in Bowling Green. Students and alumni canvassed the entire state and played an important role in creating strong public sentiment in favor of normal school legislation. In the spring of 1905, the faculty, students and alumni of Southern Normal adopted the following resolution:

#### A Petition and Pledge

We, the undersigned students of the Southern Normal School and Bowling Green Business University, heartily endorse the present campaign which is being made in Kentucky in the interest of the child, and we most respectfully petition the General Assembly of Kentucky to establish state Normal schools.

We believe that there is no one public question that is of so much vital importance to the Commonwealth of Kentucky as the one that relates to universal intelligence. The Southern Normal School has for many years been doing a very active work in preparing teachers for the public schools and in developing a general educational consciousness, and we believe that the work is of a nature and magnitude to deserve some consideration on the part of the State in its efforts to establish State Normals.

In case the General Assembly of Kentucky and the Board of Regents of the Southern Normal School and Bowling Green Business University decide to make the Southern Normal School a State institution, we most earnestly pledge to do everything we can to make it one of the great institutions of this country—one that the state of Kentucky will regard as one of its greatest achievements.

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<sup>9</sup>James P. Cornette, A History of the Western Kentucky State Teachers College (Bowling Green: Teachers College Heights, 1939), p. 87.

The thousands of former students who have attended this institution<sup>10</sup> and who are unable to affix their signatures on account of absence join us through letters and communications in this statement.<sup>11</sup>

This petition, introduced at chapel exercises eleven months prior to the opening of the session of the General Assembly, was signed by 1,182 students and alumni and was presented to the General Assembly by President Cherry when it convened in 1906. Speaking of the effect of this petition, Crabbe said the legislature had at the time "no known means to withstand a scroll a hundred feet long."<sup>12</sup>

When the joint educational committee of the House and Senate held a hearing on the Normal issue, both sides presented their cases. Cherry presented his offer to the Committee, and then Sullivan and the Reverend Hugh McLellan, pastor of the First Christian Church of Richmond, presented that town's offer. J. L. Harman, a close friend of Cherry's who was present at the hearing, said that Richmond's offer was stunning to the Bowling Green followers present and was almost an overwhelming blow to Cherry who could offer the state only three or four hundred students, one small building and no equipment. Sullivan was a forceful personality and a persuasive speaker, and

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<sup>10</sup>Since 1892 when Cherry took over the Southern Normal School, over 9,000 students had attended the institution. Approximately 50% of these had remained in Kentucky. (These figures are based on enrollment figures gleaned from the Southern Educator, Cornette's History of Western, and Lewis's history of education in Kentucky.

<sup>11</sup>State Normal Bulletin (November, 1906), p. 15.

<sup>12</sup>Teachers College Heights (December, 1934), p. 22.

Harman observed that as he ended each well-turned sentence, Cherry crouched lower and lower in his chair and tugged nervously at his cheeks and jaws. "With flushed face and frustrated plans he seemed for a while a hopeless wreck," said Harman; but "suddenly he turned to me and said, 'By granny! He can't do that to me.'"<sup>13</sup>

After the committee hearing, Cherry and Harman went to Dr. J. W. McCormack's room in the Capitol Hotel. McCormack, the Secretary of the State Board of Health and a Bowling Green resident, was a strong advocate of locating the school in Bowling Green. He requested a meeting in his rooms that evening of the key men from Bowling Green and Richmond. After each side had presented its case at the meeting, the doctor broke in saying:

Gentlemen, you are making a mistake. Work together and each get a school and {sic} fight and neither get one.<sup>14</sup>

Both sides then agreed to a proposal for two schools; the understanding being, of course, that one of the schools would be in Richmond and one in Bowling Green.

A substitute bill was drawn up providing for two normal schools and naming Bowling Green and Richmond as the sites for the schools. Judge Anthony Burnham of Richmond and Judge Lewis McQuown of Bowling Green were then invited to give their views as to the constitutionality of the new bill. Assured by the judges that the bill was satisfactory, the normal advocates decided to get Governor J. C. W.

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<sup>13</sup>J. L. Harman, "The Founder: Dr. Henry Hardin Cherry" (Typed MS, Western Kentucky University Library), p. 10.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

Beckham's approval before the bill was submitted to the legislature for action. The bill was presented to the governor and he approved everything except the naming in the bill of Bowling Green and Richmond as the sites for the schools. He felt that the naming of the sites in the bill would eliminate the consideration of other towns and thus might arouse so much opposition that the bill would be defeated. Instead he recommended that the location of the two schools be left up to a commission to be named by him. Miller was somewhat reluctant to accept this recommendation, fearing that such a commission might not favor Richmond. But the Governor assured Sullivan and Miller that they might approve the members of the commission before he appointed them, and then his recommendation was accepted.<sup>15</sup>

While the controversy over the location of the normal school was in progress, the Educational Improvement Commission was busy trying to convince the members of the legislature not to abandon the Normal schools for the sake of economy. In an article prepared for the state's newspapers, Commission president, M. O. Winfrey, wrote that a majority of the members of both houses admitted that state normals should be established, but claimed that there were insufficient funds in the treasury for this project. Winfrey appealed to the state pride of the legislators, pointing out that Kentucky was already behind other states in providing for teacher training. Once again he urged citizens to write their Senators and Representatives on this matter. This advice was rather effective as some 20,000 persons petitioned the House to pass the Normal bill.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup>Frankfort Roundabout, February 3, 1906.

On February 9, H. C. Miller, chairman of the Committee on Education No. 1, reported the newly drawn measure as a substitute for the previous proposal, H. B. 112. Five days later the first bill and its substitute were taken from the calendar and recommended to the Committee on Appropriations, which acted as a traffic cop on legislation in the House, with instructions to report the bill for action at any time. At first the Committee agreed to report a bill providing \$25,000 for one school only, but it decided to change the request. March 2, the bills were reported to the House for consideration. R. W. Miller made what the Courier-Journal termed a "magnificent" speech in favor of the two normal schools. He said that communities of the state were prepared to offer concrete inducements for the location of the normal schools, pointing out that both Richmond and Bowling Green were prepared to offer the state property free for one of the two schools. Representative Miller stated that at no time in the history of education in Kentucky was a more important step taken than was contemplated in the establishment of the Normal Schools, and he went on to explain that the only objection he had heard was that once the teachers were trained they would leave the state and give other states the benefit of their education. In answer, he pointed out that the proposed bill required students to pledge three years of service in the state. While Miller was speaking all the members laid aside newspapers and gave him their close attention and at the end applauded for about a minute. Many of the members declared Miller's speech the best of the session. H. C.

Miller, chairman of the committee reporting the bill, also spoke for it.<sup>17</sup> The third reading of the bill was then dispensed with and the substitute bill was passed unanimously 83 to 0<sup>18</sup> and once again the House broke into applause. This was really a notable victory since eleven members had previously expressed themselves as intending to vote against the bill, but failed to do so.<sup>19</sup> Seventeen members did not vote, but apparently there was no pattern of opposition among those failing to vote, as they belonged to both parties and came from all parts of the state.

March 8, the bill was reported to the Senate floor, and by unanimous consent the rules were suspended and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill immediately. Senator Burnham spoke for the bill before two efforts were made to amend it. One of these efforts was directed by the Executive Committee of the Association of Kentucky Colleges, an organization representing some of the private colleges of the state, which had appointed a committee to visit Frankfort and advocate an amendment to the pending normal school bill. Senator S. E. DeHaven proposed the amendment supported by this group which provided that:

. . . no subject shall be taught in said normal school and no courses of study provided for in them other than those subjects and courses of study which prepares the students for teaching in the public schools.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>This account based on material in the Courier-Journal, March 3, 1906.

<sup>18</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House Journal, 1906, p. 1183.

<sup>19</sup>See Courier-Journal, March 3, 1906.

<sup>20</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, Senate Journal, 1906, p. 113.



This amendment which would have confined the normal schools to the preparation of teachers was rejected by the Senate on a voice vote. Senator Alvis S. Bennett of Clark County then proposed an amendment eliminating a long enumeration of conditions applying to certificates granted by the normal schools which was voted down 20 to 16. After these two attempts to change, the Senate passed the normal school bill with all 34 Senators who were present voting for it.<sup>21</sup> March 21 the bill was signed into law by Governor J. C. W. Beckham; and since it included the emergency clause, the provisions of the bill went into effect at once.

The legislation as finally passed by the General Assembly provided that the state should be divided into two districts, the Eastern and the Western, and that a normal school should be established in each district (see map on next page). The bill provided for appropriations of \$5,000 to each of the schools for equipment, buildings and grounds and \$20,000 annually to each for current operating expenses. The object of these institutions according to the bill was:

The fulfillment of section one hundred and eighty-three of the Constitution of Kentucky, by giving to the teachers of the Commonwealth such training in the common school branches, in the science and art of teaching, and in such other branches as may be deemed necessary . . . to enable them to make the schools through the state effective.<sup>22</sup>

Each of the schools was to be governed by a five-member board of

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 1131-1132.

<sup>22</sup>Kentucky Statutes (Carroll, 1906), c. 113, Art. XVII, Section 4535a.

SCALE OF MILES



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Map based on lines described by Cornette, A History of the Western Kentucky State Teachers College, p. 122.

regents, with four members being appointed by the governor and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction serving as the chairman of each board. The boards of regents were authorized to issue upon completion of specified courses diplomas which were equivalent to state teachers certificates. Each legislative district was entitled to ten annual appointments of students for free tuition. These pupils were to be recommended by the county school superintendents and were to receive free tuition upon agreement to teach in the state's common schools for at least three years. There were various other provisions in the act but these were the most significant ones.

The act also provided, of course, for the appointment of a locating commission composed of one member from each of the seven appellate court districts. On April 5, 1906, Governor Beckham appointed the following members to the commission: H. H. Arnett, banker, Nicholasville; John Morris, schoolman, Covington; George Payne, schoolman, Paducah, a former student of Cherry's Southern Normal School; George Edwards, banker, Russellville; Basil Richardson, attorney, Glasgow; E. H. Mark, city superintendent, Louisville; and M. G. Watson, state Senator, Louisa.<sup>23</sup>

The one-sidedness of the vote on the normal school legislation is misleading because there was considerable opposition. Writing in the Southern School Journal for October, 1906, M. O. Winfrey, Chairman of the Educational Improvement Commission, observed that in spite of its success, the campaign for normal schools had not been all "smooth sailing" but was confronted by an organized and powerful foe <sup>who</sup> ~~which~~ posed

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<sup>23</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., pp. 283-284.

a threat at every step. He attributed the success to the overwhelming cooperation of the state's 8,000 public school teachers, the support of some 20,000 private citizens who joined the battle, the assistance of many state officials and legislators and the hard-working members of the Educational Improvement Commission. He singled out for special praise for their efforts such men as H. H. Cherry, who spent fifty-one days before the General Assembly, working day and night for the normal bill, and E. E. Hume, who stood in the halls of the statehouse all winter long battling for the legislation.

Opposition to state supported normal schools came primarily from two sources; those who felt that the preparation of teachers at public expense should be confined to the Normal Department of the State College, and those who feared that the new normal schools would encroach upon the field of the private colleges.<sup>24</sup> As was noted earlier in discussing the 1890 Constitutional Convention, there was a group in the state who were opposed to any tax-supported higher education. This minority was comprised principally of those wealthy individuals who opposed public education in general because it meant heavier taxes for them even though their own children attended private schools, and some, but not all, of those persons who had an interest in existing private or sectarian schools, <sup>and</sup> who felt that publicly supported normal schools would be injurious to their own interests. Both of these groups were influenced by their strong belief in laissez-faire, free enterprise philosophies and fear of

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<sup>24</sup>Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, p. 11.

state control and domination.<sup>25</sup> As early as 1850 Superintendent Breckinridge had taken note of the opposition of the private schools and had assured them that no one meant them harm. He wrote:

I should regret exceedingly, if any educational interest or institution, existing in this state, were to resolve the impression that the friends of state education, in its wide sense, either desired or expected to do them the least harm, or in the smallest degree obstruct their proper career. What we believe, is, that the State has a work to do, which no one else can do as properly or as well, and which no existing institution, sect, or party, would be willing that any other one, or any combination amongst them, should presume to attempt for the state. In its proper sphere, every school, every academy, every seminary, every college, must be benefited by every successful attempt on the part of the state to do its duty.<sup>26</sup>

Superintendent Sarksdale Hamlett, speaking after normal schools had already been established, made this observation regarding the opposition to such institutions:

There can be but two explanations for this failure of the Legislature to heed the recommendation of practically all the Superintendents of Public Instruction. Either there were interests which did not want the state to train and educate its own teachers in normal schools and which were powerful enough to prevent legislation, or the Legislature were more interested in the quality of teaching done in the schools, or both of these sets of interests may have cooperated in securing legislation. It may have been that the first interests mentioned with their able and powerful leaders may have furnished plausible arguments for the use of the more numerous interests of the last named kind; for it is a fact that these people unfriendly to the public

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<sup>25</sup>Similar opposition is noted by Dabney, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>26</sup>Kentucky, Legislative Documents, 1851, p. 111.

school system have never since the founding of the system been in the majority.<sup>27</sup>

Hamlett went on to say that these opponents reasoned as follows:

We do not believe in educating all children at public expense; we do not believe in making the common schools more and more popular by furnishing them with better and better houses, equipment and teachers; and, therefore, we do not believe the state should establish and maintain normal schools; and, if it be determined that the state shall do this thing, we do believe in retarding the progress of such schools in every possible way. He summed up this opposition by saying:

As a general rule, the criticism of the Common School system and its corollary, the Normal School System, arises from one of two general facts--the system for training all the people's children either is interfering with somebody's ancient and aristocratic privileges or it is getting in the way of somebody's private business.<sup>28</sup>

Some of the strongest opposition to the normal movement came from the State College at Lexington. This opposition stemmed from both ideological and practical considerations. It was the firm conviction of several persons, including James K. Patterson, President of State College, that the endowment of more than one college in the state would be detrimental to public higher education. These people felt that the means of the state would be much more effective if concentrated on one school. They feared that to try to endow more than one state school would simply result in sectional feelings

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<sup>27</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

and local jealousies which would weaken higher education.<sup>29</sup> From a practical standpoint, the leaders of the State College feared that creation of state normal schools would reduce both the number of students attending the College and the size of their legislative appropriations. Thus in a letter to H. H. Cherry in November, 1906, M. O. Winfrey said James Patterson had been the arch enemy of state normals and bitterly opposed their establishment.<sup>30</sup>

In the person of President Patterson the normal schools faced an able opponent. Born in Scotland and educated at Hanover College, Patterson was involved in education most of his life. He began teaching at age seventeen and served as principal of Greenville Academy, Greenville, Kentucky, and Transylvania High School in Lexington, Kentucky, before being hired as a professor at State College. Serving as president of the State College for forty-one years, he became almost a legendary figure and is regarded as the "father of the University of Kentucky." Possessing a forceful personality, Patterson was kind and wise, but also tyrannical and full of idiosyncracies. He sometimes displayed unnecessary jealousy of his prerogatives, and even in the smallest of matters he always intended to be master of his domain. He was a man of varied interests who did much studying on his own; he was a scholar who achieved greatness in no particular field of scholarship.

Patterson was devoted to the State College, defending it against the onslaughts of the denominational schools and on one occasion

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<sup>29</sup>F. Smith, op. cit., p. 731.

<sup>30</sup>Letter from M. O. Winfrey to H. H. Cherry, November 1, 1906, in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

saving it financially by securing loans to the school with his own resources. He came to look upon the school as his possession to be protected from all interlopers.

In 1875 Patterson went to Europe as Kentucky's official representative to the International Geographic Congress in Paris. He returned from this trip believing more strongly than ever that one of the greatest needs of his adopted state was a "first class university adequately endowed, where all her youth may obtain as good an education as can be had anywhere in America."<sup>31</sup> Patterson felt this could not be accomplished if the state spread its resources among several other state schools.

So, in 1904 after the unsuccessful efforts of the normal forces to get an appropriation for a separate building for the Normal Department at the State College, at Patterson's insistence a special committee of the Board of Trustees was created to prepare "to meet any action adverse to the interests of the College in the next legislature."<sup>32</sup> A few months later the president warned the Board of Trustees that the State Education Association (KEA), "inspired by hostility outside our own organization, and by disaffected persons within,"<sup>33</sup> was organizing efforts to separate the Normal Department

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<sup>31</sup>James Hopkins, op. cit., p. 141.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>33</sup>This was a reference particularly to R. N. Roark, the head of the Normal Department. Roark had already been reprimanded for his lobbying activities before the 1904 General Assembly. He resigned the day after Patterson made the above statement and became a leader in the normal movement and was appointed as the first president of the Eastern State Normal when it was founded.



from the College and establish it as an independent institution.<sup>34</sup>

In January, 1906, after the Educational Improvement Commission had launched its all-out campaign for normal schools, Patterson made the following statement to the Courier-Journal:

It is the wish of the State College to build up, strengthen and develop our school without reference to the Educational Improvement Association. Our attitude toward the Association is one of sympathy and entire good will. . . . There is no feeling of hostility on the part of any member of the Board of Trustees or of anyone identified with that Board, and so long as the franchises of State College, its integrity and income are not interfered with, we are in entire sympathy with any movement to improve the educational conditions of the state.

We do not propose to interfere with the Association in getting all it wants provided we are not molested.<sup>35</sup>

The State College could hardly afford to go on record as opposing a movement having such widespread support as the normal campaign; yet, the leaders of the college could not completely overcome their fears that state normal schools would become rivals, competing for students and appropriations.

Add to these factors the fact that the establishment of state normal schools involved the expenditure of public money, something the legislators were always reluctant to do unless they had the overwhelming approval of their constituents, and you get a better idea of why Kentucky was so long in establishing state normals.

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<sup>34</sup>Hopkins, op. cit., p. 214.

<sup>35</sup>Courier-Journal, January 10, 1906.

Kentucky, of course, was not alone in this respect. The South for many years was virgin territory as far as the professional training of teachers was concerned. As late as 1868 there was not a single normal school in the entire South.<sup>36</sup> Soon the Peabody Fund<sup>37</sup> began to devote a large portion of its income to stimulation of the establishment of normal schools, and gradually the state normal school worked its way southward. Kentucky very early expressed some interest in this matter, but very little was done.

One of the major reasons for this slowness of action was the indifference of the public. A majority of the state's citizens had little idea of what normal schools were, of the services they could perform, or of their value to a system of public education. Consequently, there was no strong public sentiment for the establishment of such schools. Such institutions grow out of the wishes of the masses and not out of the teachings of professional educators.<sup>38</sup> The educational experts had understood for years the importance of normal schools for training teachers, but it took over 100 years for the general public to develop an appreciation for their value and make their wishes known to their representatives in the state legislature.<sup>39</sup>

Superintendent Ed P. Thompson, 1887-1895, noted in one of his reports that:

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<sup>36</sup>Knight, op. cit., p. 412.

<sup>37</sup>This was an endowment fund set up by George Peabody to promote educational development in the South, especially the training of teachers.

<sup>38</sup>See Dabney, op. cit., p. 20, and Travis Smith, op. cit., pp. 165-166.

<sup>39</sup>See H. L. Donovan, A State's Elementary Teacher-Training Problem, pp. 11-17.

. . . in the General Assembly the real opposition (to normal schools) seemed never at any time to be strong or active. The failure of the measure appears to have been due rather to lack of determined leadership than to any settled purpose to defeat it.<sup>40</sup>

In 1905 and 1906 the Education Improvement Commission of the KEA provided this leadership, and through their thorough and aggressive campaign the state's citizens were aroused enough to demand state supported schools for the training of teachers. The campaign conducted by the EIC resulted in such overwhelming public sentiment in favor of normal schools that it would have been politically unwise for the legislators to have refused any longer to take action. Speaking of the EIC's campaign, S. K. Mardis, Superintendent of Schools in Toronto, Ohio, said:

The Educational Improvement Commission of Kentucky, judging from the results it secured before the Legislature, has done more work in one year in the promotion of public education than the Ohio Federation has been able to do in three.<sup>41</sup>

Dr. Charles W. Dabney, President of Cincinnati University, remarked that the EIC accomplished more with what money it had to spend<sup>42</sup> than any similar group in his knowledge.<sup>43</sup>

When the Location Commission met in Frankfort on April 12 to organize, B. M. Arnett was selected chairman and John Morris was

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<sup>40</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, Legislative Documents, 1893, Vol. 3, No. 27, p. 15.

<sup>41</sup>State Normal Bulletin (November, 1906), p. 24.

<sup>42</sup>The EIC reported receipts of \$1,553.05 and expenditures of \$1,052.01. It listed about 80 contributors.

<sup>43</sup>State Normal Bulletin (November, 1906), p. 25.

selected secretary, and the Commission gave notice that all cities interested in having one of the normal schools should send in their proposals in writing before May 7. Although this was supposed to be only an organizational meeting, the contest for the schools got underway in earnest. Delegations of leading citizens from Richmond, Bowling Green and Glasgow were present and insisted on presenting their claims to the Commission. The Richmond and Bowling Green delegations urged prompt action by the group while Glasgow asked for a little time to prepare its offer. H. H. Cherry and the Bowling Green delegation were particularly interested in an early decision and several members of the Commission left with them to inspect the buildings and site offered by that city.<sup>44</sup>

The Glasgow Republican of April 26, 1906, observed:

The town which secures this school will be fortunate indeed, and while some think it is all politics, and that no difference what inducements Glasgow might offer that the school will go elsewhere, yet the chance is bright enough to justify an effort.

Earlier the Republican had noted that Richardson and Payne, members of the locating committee, were both natives of Barren County and that with two of the seven commission members from the county, Glasgow should be in the fight.<sup>45</sup>

The April 12 meeting really decided things as far as the location of the schools, and the Bowling Green and Richmond delegations pretty much had things their way before the Commission. Before

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<sup>44</sup>Courier-Journal, April 13, 1906.

<sup>45</sup>Glasgow Republican, April 12, 1906.

leaving town the delegations from these two towns got together and worked on an agreeable district division. One significant move was to place Marion County in the Western District thus taking Lebanon out of competition with Richmond for the Eastern District school.<sup>46</sup>

Between April 12 and May 7, members of the commission visited several cities offering sites for the schools, and on May 7, the Commission met at the Old Inn in Louisville to decide on the location of the two schools.<sup>47</sup> With the exception of Guthrie, the Commission heard offers from only Bowling Green and Richmond. Guthrie offered eleven acres and buildings worth \$15,000, but since the town had not complied with the terms of competition outlined by the Commission and submitted her proposal in writing, her offer was not considered. Glasgow had been expected to make an offer but was not represented at the meeting. Richmond offered the campus and buildings of the former Central University, and Bowling Green offered the campus and buildings of the Southern Normal School.<sup>48</sup> The Commission voted unanimously to accept these offers and locate the schools in these two cities.

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<sup>46</sup>Courier-Journal, April 13, 1906.

<sup>47</sup>In attendance at the meeting, in addition to the commission members were State Superintendent James H. Fuqua; E. W. Miller, Richmond; H. H. Cherry, Bowling Green; H. B. Hines, Bowling Green; W. H. Shackelford, Richmond; J. A. Sullivan, Richmond; C. U. McElroy, Bowling Green; J. W. Potter, Bowling Green; R. E. Turley, Richmond; and Clarence Woods, Richmond.

<sup>48</sup>Bowling Green citizens had raised some \$30,000 or \$40,000 to pay off the debts on the buildings so they could be turned over to the state debt free.

The Glasgow Republican was somewhat bitter and took a position different from that expressed earlier, charging that Bowling Green got the normal because of politics. The Republican pointed out that sixteen citizens of Warren County held appointive offices under the state administration, and complained that now "the State Normal school has been located in Bowling Green as an additional sop to Warren County constituency. . . ." The paper contended the reason Glasgow was passed over was that Barren County always voted Democratic through thick and thin and there was no reason to give her anything. The doubtful counties, said the Republican, were the ones that got all the "pie".<sup>49</sup>

The editor of the Glasgow Times took an entirely different viewpoint, writing:

. . . if any citizen of Glasgow feels the spirit of envy and jealousy rankling in his bosom because of the good fortune that has come to our sister city, he ought to pause and reflect a moment before giving vent to his feelings.<sup>50</sup>

He said Glasgow had never really been in the fight for the normal schools, but that it had lost the opportunity twenty-odd years ago when its citizens failed to provide the needed financial support and Mell and Williams moved their private school to Bowling Green. Giving credit to the citizens of Bowling Green the Times stated:

We congratulate our neighboring city of Bowling Green in securing the location of one of the Normal Schools. The prize was worthy of the best effort of any community,

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<sup>49</sup>Glasgow Republican, May 10, 1906.

<sup>50</sup>Glasgow Times, May 11, 1906.

and, as her people always do in matters pertaining to the welfare of their city and county, the citizens of Bowling Green put up a fight for the State Normal that meant victory from the outset.<sup>51</sup>

A couple of years later the Bowling Green Times wrote that "the state had been made to believe by well nigh unanswerable arguments that Bowling Green was the logical and only proper location for a normal school in Western Kentucky."<sup>52</sup>

In July, 1906, the Normal Executive Council, composed of the presidents of the two normals and the state superintendent, met and formulated the guidelines for the operation of the two schools. In their statement of purposes they said:

The Normal Schools will be conducted upon the conviction that the people of Kentucky created them primarily for the benefit of the children of Kentucky. . . . The teachers of the country schools may rest assured that their names will receive first consideration. . . . The Normal Schools shall stand distinctly for two things, thoroughness of scholarship and power to teach.<sup>53</sup>

Significantly the Council decided that entrance requirements should not be too stiff because:

It is the business of a school to give knowledge and power to its pupils, rather than to demand that those who enter its portals shall come already possessed of these.<sup>54</sup>

In the statement it was pointed out to prospective teachers that

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Clipping from Bowling Green Times, 1908 (exact date not given) in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>53</sup>As quoted in the Glasgow Times, July 20, 1906.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

those completing the elementary course in the normals were eligible to teach two years without further examination while those who completed the advanced course were entitled to a life certificate.

The Council completed with this note aimed at those individuals and institutions who had opposed the Normal School movement:

As the new Normal Schools enter the great fraternity of educational forces in the state they expect--as they have a right to expect--the wholehearted cooperation of every friend of education, whether individual or institution, throughout the Commonwealth.<sup>55</sup>

When the respective boards of regents met, they selected two leaders in the normal school movement to be the first presidents of the two new institutions. R. N. Roark was selected to head the Eastern Normal, and H. H. Cherry was selected to head the Western Normal.

The institutions actually opened their doors before the struggle for normal schools was completely won. All along there had been some apprehension on the part of private school interests that state normal schools would compete seriously with other institutions of higher learning in the state. This opposition hadn't been able to muster a single vote in the General Assembly, but they were able to delay the opening of the schools for a short time by turning to the courts. When Superintendent James Fuqua made formal application to State Auditor W. S. Hager on June 13, for the \$5,000 appropriation to the two schools for equipment and repairs, the action was promptly met by the filing of papers enjoining the Auditor from payment of the

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid.



money. The request for the injunction was filed in the name of A. A. Marsee, owner of a small amount of property in Bell County, who had been persuaded by the normal school opponents to file the papers. Marsee, whose mountain land was worth about \$300, based his opposition to the schools on Section 184, of the Kentucky Constitution which states:

No sum shall be raised or collected for education other than in common schools until the question of taxation is submitted to the legal voters, and the majority of the votes cast at said election shall be in favor of said taxation; provided, the tax now imposed for educational purposes, and for the endowment and maintenance of the A & M College, shall remain until changed by law.

Marsee's attorneys contended that the legislature could not appropriate public money for normal schools until a referendum had been held on the issue. When the request for the injunction came before Judge H. L. Stout of the Franklin Circuit Court, he denied it; and when later called upon to rule on the constitutionality of the normal school act, he ruled in favor of the schools. The case was then taken to the Court of Appeals where it was finally decided April 24, 1907. Marsee's lawyers argued that public policy, as outlined in the constitutional convention of 1890, required that the education of teachers should be limited to the A & M College because it was the only institution having normal teaching which was expressly authorized by the constitution to receive aid from the legislature. The counsel for the normal schools contended that the normals were to aid the common schools and that an appropriation for this purpose should be upheld on the same principle as an appropriation for the State Department of Edu-

cation. They proposed that no greater calamity could befall the state than for the courts to stop the normal schools at the instance of the appellant who owned \$300 worth of mountain land. They pointed out that no one else had joined in the attempt to stop the schools and that the suit was actually brought by a small group and not on behalf of any large number of taxpayers.<sup>56</sup> Judge Henry S. Barker, later president of the University of Kentucky, presented the opinion of the Court of Appeals upholding the normal school legislation. Stating that normal schools were among the educational purposes embraced in the provisions of Section 184, he said that what the 1906 act did was to separate the normal schools into three parts—one remained connected to the State University, while two others were set up at Bowling Green and Richmond. There was nothing in Section 184 which prevented the legislature from dividing the normal school into as many parts as it desired, said the judge. And certainly, he said, it will not be contended that the legislature lacks the power to make any appropriations it sees fit for the benefit of the normal school as conducted under the auspices of the A & M College. The Judge concluded:

Normal schools are among the institutions for which, under the proviso of section 184, the legislature is authorized to make appropriations without submitting the question to a vote of the people; and therefore, the act under discussion must be held valid.<sup>57</sup>

Thus the normal school legislation was upheld, but it was necessary

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<sup>56</sup>For an account of this action see Eastern Kentucky State College, Three Decades of Progress, pp. 12-13.

<sup>57</sup>Marsee v. Hager, State Auditor, 125 Kentucky Reports 453 (1907).

to resort to the subterfuge of considering the normal schools as branches of the State University in order to by-pass the section of the constitution which had been so vigorously denounced by W. M. Beckner at the 1890 constitutional convention. This would not have been necessary had his sound advice been followed, and this certainly had never been the intention of those engaged in the movement to establish the normal schools.

On the whole the state normal schools were very well accepted. Comments from county superintendents and school men indicate that the schools were viewed with optimism in all parts of the state. George Payne, principal of Paducah High School and a member of the locating commission, commented, "The state of Kentucky has honored herself and has shown her progressive spirit in establishing two State Normals."<sup>58</sup> Charles Jones, Superintendent of Marshall County's schools, stated, "I most heartily endorse the establishment of State Normal Schools, and believe it is the greatest victory yet won for educational reform and uplift in Kentucky."<sup>59</sup> "The founding of the State Normal Schools is the greatest act that our state has ever performed for our rural teachers," said G. H. Wells, Superintendent of the Graded Schools of Cadiz, Kentucky.<sup>60</sup> A. C. Burton, Superintendent of Morganfield Graded Schools, predicted, "I am sure the opening of the State Normals

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<sup>58</sup>State Normal Bulletin (November, 1906), p. 7.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

will mark the beginning of a new era in the educational history of Kentucky.<sup>61</sup> H. H. Cherry's brother, T. C. Cherry, who was now Superintendent of the Bowling Green Public Schools, stated:

Never in the history of education in Kentucky has such a stride forward been made. In a few years the whole state will feel the impact of the Normal movement, and every child, even of the remotest rural school, will become the direct beneficiary of the movement.<sup>62</sup>

Superintendent of the Hardin County Schools, J. L. Pilkenton, wrote:

I take pleasure in saying to you that I regard the Normal School movement as the dawning of a great educational reform. Never before in the history of the Commonwealth has such an opportunity been presented for the professional training of teachers. We can now move forward with renewed hope and never failing courage.<sup>63</sup>

A collection of quotations favoring the normal schools could be extended to fill several pages, but these are sufficient to show that the schools were enthusiastically accepted by the teachers and superintendents throughout the state.

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

## CHAPTER V

### Henry Hardin Cherry: Normal School Leader

One of the most determined and most effective workers in the campaign for the establishment of state normal schools was Henry Hardin Cherry of Bowling Green. No history of education in Kentucky would be complete without an account of the contributions of this outstanding educator and statesman.

Henry Hardin Cherry was born November 16, 1864, the same day that Sherman set out from Atlanta on his march to the sea. Henry was the seventh of nine sons born to George Washington Cherry and Frances Martha Stahl Cherry. Born to parents of Irish and Dutch descent, he possessed both the nervous vitality of the former and the stubborn persistence of the latter. Henry Hardin was reared on a farm near the Barren River in the sand hills of Warren County about ten miles west of Bowling Green where he grew up under the discipline of hard work and strict economy. He and his brothers made money selling farm produce and ax handle timber in nearby Bowling Green. Until he was over twenty-one years of age, H. H. had received only such education as could be gained from two or three months' attendance at the rural neighborhood school and from reading on his own. Possibly the difficulties he encountered in getting an education strengthened his determination in later life to improve the educational opportunities of other young Kentuckians.

In January, 1886, with \$72 in his pocket, H. H. walked to Bowling Green and enrolled in the Southern Normal School, one of

the leading private schools in the state. The school in which Cherry enrolled had its beginning in the neighboring town of Glasgow in 1875. In February of that year A. W. Mell opened a private school which he called the Glasgow Normal Institute. The next year the school opened by Mell, a graduate of the National Normal University in Lebanon, Ohio, was chartered by the state legislature. Although only nineteen years of age, Mell had been teaching for three years. He possessed certain personal qualities which made him a successful teacher and leader of young people.<sup>1</sup> He had an earnest conviction that teaching was a holy mission, and his students were inspired by his idealism and optimism.

In the 1870's the teachers in the rural schools around Glasgow and Bowling Green got their training, as did most other Kentucky teachers at this time, by attending the common schools for a few years, studying at home for a while, and possibly attending a "cram school" for a few weeks where they studied intensively the questions used on qualifying examinations administered by the county boards of education to secure certificates to teach. Prior to the founding of Mell's school, few of the teachers of the region had any educational training beyond the common schools.<sup>2</sup>

In January, 1875, Professor Mell issued the first catalog of his school in which he included this statement of principles:

In no department of our social system is seen such lamentable deficiency as in that of our

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<sup>1</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

### Public Schools.

A vast deal of money and effort has been expended upon it and yet the people complain, and justly too, that the schools do not meet their necessities. Now this is discouraging, and in our opinion, can be avoided by a more careful preparation on the part of teachers.

After an extensive and varied experience in different sections of both the South and North, it has become a settled conviction with us that teachers, like all other professional men, need a professional training, and just in the proportion that our work is in itself peculiar, distinct and important, do the teachers who are to carry forward this work, require a careful and thorough training.

Theology, Medicine and Law have their schools specially devoted to the study of these respective subjects, and no one can enter either profession without suitable training.

This being true in other branches of trust, how much more should it be true in ours where the chances for failure are endlessly multiplied, and the field for invention and strategy much broader, and the material with which we deal infinitely more valuable.

It is to meet this urgent, yet reasonable, demand that the Normal Institute is about to be established. And while we shall strive to provide at any cost such instruction as shall meet the wants of all classes, we shall strive to give the teachers that training which alone can make them successful in their work. Keeping this one aim in view, all arrangements shall be made with reference to the least possible cost to the student; thus bringing the advantages of the school within easy reach of all classes, rich and poor alike. In so doing, we feel confident, in asserting that it will be to the interest of every one wishing to obtain an education with the least possible cost to give us their patronage.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>As quoted in Cornetts, pp. 28-29.

Two things in Mell's statement are of particular significance. One is the expression of his sincere belief in the necessity of professional training for teachers; the other is the fact that he pledges to attempt to provide an education cheaply enough that it will be within the reach of all. Both of these principles played an important part in the future development of the Glasgow Normal and its descendants.<sup>4</sup>

With the opening of his school, Mell announced that the following courses would be offered if a sufficient number of people wished to pursue them:

	Spelling, Reading, Geography, Arithmetic, English, Grammar.
Mathematics	Higher Arithmetic, Elementary Algebra, Higher Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Surveying.
Sciences	Botany, Geology, Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Hygiene, Physiology.
Languages	Latin, Greek.
Drills	Penmanship and Vocal Music. Composition and Criticism. Forensic discussion.
Business Courses	Spelling, Penmanship, English, Grammar, Arithmetic, Debating, Composition, Single and Double Entry Bookkeeping, Commission Business, Compound Partnership, Banking and Commercial Terms, and Business Correspondence. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Cornette, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 31.



Undoubtedly classes were not conducted in most of the courses listed here, but this does give some insight into the type of work offered by the school. Conspicuously absent from the course of studies listed in the catalog are any courses which could be regarded as providing professional training for teachers. However, elsewhere, was a statement that "regular drills in school government and method of teaching" would be provided if enough teachers wished to join the class.<sup>6</sup>

After some rough going during the first two years, the Glasgow Normal began to flourish and by the 1880's it had an annual enrollment of about 300 students. In 1882 Mell was joined by J. Tom Williams who became a partner in the school. By this time the reputation of the school was well established and students were coming long distances to attend. In 1883, State Superintendent Joseph D. Pickett said the Glasgow Normal School had been a great blessing to Barren and to many other counties in supplying qualified teachers for the public schools. J. R. Alexander, an alumnus of the school, later said that Professor Mell's school practically revolutionized teaching in Barren and adjacent counties, and that the Glasgow Normal was primarily responsible for the large number of able and well-trained men and women who started teaching in that section in the 1880's.<sup>7</sup>

By 1883 the enrollment of the school had grown to such proportions that its physical facilities were insufficient. Mell and

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

Williams asked the citizens of the Glasgow community to secure the financing of a new building until they themselves could pay for it. The citizens failed to come to their aid, and as a result, they decided to move their school to Bowling Green. The move was made in the late summer of 1884, and Mell and Williams gave their new institution the name of Southern Normal School and Business College. The school got off to a relatively good start at its new location with a daily attendance of approximately 400 for 1884-85.<sup>8</sup> By this time, in addition to Mell and Williams, there were ten other members on the faculty. Most of these members taught several different subjects rather than concentrating their efforts in one specific subject.

As was true of the Glasgow Normal, the "Teachers Course" was still the distinctive feature of the school, and the objectives of the course were stated in these terms:

The object sought in this department is the best preparation of teachers for the work of the schoolroom. The training is broad in its character, embracing such points as: 1. A thorough and sufficient knowledge of the subject matter to be imparted. 2. A masterly grasp upon the principles that underlie the right organization and management of schools. 3. The latest and most approved methods of teaching the various subjects that fall within the curriculum of studies. Prominent under this last topic are discussed the inductive, deductive, and analytical methods, especially the theories of Grube, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Horace Mann. The practical features of kindergarten teaching are dwelt upon in such a manner as to familiarize pupil teachers with them. Pupils in this department are taught sand moulding in geography, gymnastics, and the elements of drawing.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

Also, in this connection, much attention is given to the use and manipulation of apparatus. In fact, our young teachers construct a great many pieces of apparatus for the illustration of the more common facts of physical and mathematical science. 4. A systematic study of the principles that may be applied in the discipline of the school-room. It is our object in this part of the training to show how schools may be controlled by leading pupils to see that all honest effort is infinitely better than any form of shirking. More than this, we lead our pupils to apprehend the value of pure character in the teachers as an all-prevailing element in the control of pupils.<sup>9</sup>

Although there were not many courses of a professional nature included in the curriculum of the Southern Normal, the above statement indicates that Mell and Williams were trying to give some special training to teachers and they were acquainted with some of the outstanding educational thinkers of the time.

When H. H. Cherry entered the school in 1836, it was doing quite well. Since J. Tom Williams had become a partner in the school, the advertising had been increased, and the growing enrollments indicate advertising had been fruitful. Cherry probably took note of this fact while a student at the school. H. H. was able to stay in school about ten months before his \$72 was exhausted, and during this time he studied business and penmanship. He described his education in this way:

Not having ciphered through Ray's Third Book Arithmetic prior to leaving home, nor having gone through Butler's Grammar, I was naturally unprepared at the close of my school term for the more important duties of life.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

With his money all gone, Cherry turned to teaching "writing schools" around Warren County and these were his principal source of income until J. Tom Williams gave him a job teaching penmanship in the Southern Normal School. For a time he was both a teacher and a student, teaching classes to pay for his tuition to others. Shortly he was given some classes in shorthand and bookkeeping in addition to his penmanship classes. The few scattered terms he spent in the Southern Normal School, however, constituted the full extent of his formal education.

During the first few years following the move to Bowling Green, the school prospered and the enrollment grew to double what it had been at Glasgow. That the school was quite attractive is indicated by the fact that it numbers among its students several who went on to eminent success, such as Cordell Hull, who became United States Secretary of State; and Edwin Norris, who became governor of Montana.<sup>11</sup> In the late 1880's the school began to have difficulties. Tuition had been kept so low that income was not sufficient for maintaining the school. In the summer of 1890, professors Mell and Williams gave up the management of the Southern Normal School.

With the departure of Mell and Williams, the school was taken over by two recent graduates, H. A. Evans and W. J. Davis, who managed it until the end of the fall term. The school was then taken over by J. R. Alexander, a former faculty member, and H. McD. Fletcher, a scholarly Irishman, and they operated the school during

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

1890-91. During the 1891-92 school year Alexander operated the school, then in 1892, he left the school to go to Mississippi to become the head of Calhoun Institute. H. H. Cherry decided that he would start a new school in the buildings of the Southern Normal. He wrote his older brother, T. C., who was president of Acadia College in Louisiana and asked him to become his partner in the undertaking. T. C. accepted the offer and returned to Bowling Green where the brothers started their enterprise in 1892. T. C. was thirty years old; H. H. was only twenty-eight, and both had only limited education and experience. Their finances were even more limited, but these handicaps were offset by their strong constitutions, able minds, burning ambition and fierce determination.

The opening of the Bowling Green Business College and Literary Institute was modest, with only twenty-eight students meeting in four dingy classrooms. H. H. was in charge of the business college and responsible for advertising and taking care of correspondence, while T. C. took care of the Literary Institute and most of the classroom work. Somehow the school survived the panic of 1893. The next year "Southern Normal" was restored to the title of the school, indicating its interest in training prospective teachers.

From the beginning the Cherry brothers considered their school as a direct descendent of the Mell and Williams school. This is indicated in their advertising which stated, "hundreds of graduates holding fine positions," and giving 1875 as the year in which the school was founded. The purpose of the school was stated as being "to give instruction in the following: Business, Shorthand, Typewriting, Penmanship, Telegraphy and English Science and Languages."

In 1894 the brothers restored the emphasis upon the normal department of the school. This was wise as there was a demand in the region for a private normal school. In an advertising booklet put out by the city of Bowling Green that year, Cherry advertised the school as "The Leading Normal School in the South."<sup>12</sup>

Maintaining the normal department did pose some problems for the brothers. Tuition to the normal department was lower than that to the Business College, while the cost of instruction in the former was somewhat higher as a result of the smaller classes. There were several times during the first few years of the school's existence when it appeared that the sensible thing to do would be to close the normal department and operate only the business college. The retention of the normal department through those lean years was probably a result of T. C.'s influence. His main interest was in this field, and he usually conducted several teacher's institutes each summer, and through this work was able to attract many teachers to the Southern Normal.<sup>13</sup> The Cherry Brothers stated the objectives of their school as follows:

- (1) To furnish the elements of a liberal education, under the following conditions: (a) The advantages of the school are shared by whites only<sup>(14)</sup>—both male and female—without distinction; (b) The time required is the least possible consistent with thorough work

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<sup>12</sup>Brochures and pamphlets in H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>13</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>14</sup>From 1904-1950 state law prohibited the teaching of white and Negro students in the same institution. See Kentucky Revised Statutes (1950), Section 158.020, paragraph 2.

in all departments; (c) classes and studies are so arranged that students who may not be able to complete a full course in any department may enter at any time, study what is most desirable, and get full credit for what they accomplish; (d) students in the Southern Normal can leave off at any stage, recruit their health or finances, and return to complete the course at any future time. (2) To bring the expense within the reach of all classes who may desire an education, and subject to the following conditions: (a) Tuition rates are kept sufficiently high to provide adequate facilities in all departments; (b) rates for board and other accommodations are kept at low figures of cost, as based upon the lowest wholesale cash rates for large quantities of goods.<sup>15</sup>

Not only were the objectives of the Cherry School similar to those of the Mall and Williams institution, but the curricula also were generally the same.

But, although there were similarities in the two schools, the new Southern Normal School very soon began to show characteristics all its own. The school started to bear the stamp of the personality, ideas and philosophy of H. H. Cherry. In a "Declaration of Principles and Policies" for the school, Cherry expressed these concepts:

To be a live school and to impart to its students a burning zeal to do and be something.

To be progressive, to use modern methods and equipment, but to reject all worthless educational fads.

To let the reputation of the school be sustained by real merit.

To seek recognition of the public to the extent the school deserves it.

To fight against ignorance, and for higher

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<sup>15</sup>As quoted in Cornetto, p. 72.

education and the liberation of the human soul.

To cooperate with all educational institutions that do honest work and to bid them God speed in their efforts.

To "ring the rising bell in the human soul" by inspiring all students who come in touch with the work of the institution.

To teach that self-control is an imperative duty and the first great obligation that every person must fulfill, if he would succeed.

To instill in the minds of the students the great truth that every person is created to do something to be a producer.

To teach students the power of earnestness and to warn them against all show and pretense.

To make the school self-governing and to create a high moral sentiment among the pupils.

To refuse to organize or permit the organization of any club or society that would foster caste and destroy cooperation, but rather to teach that the good of one is the good of all.<sup>16</sup>

To recognize no aristocracy except that of work and character.

To lead the student to understand that a broad and liberal education is essential to the highest degree of success in any endeavor of life and that unless he has a purpose in life and is willing to pursue it closely and courageously, he will fail.

To lead the student to see that success depends mainly upon his own efforts, and that he must discover the man in himself before he can become a being of power and influence.<sup>17</sup>

By 1900, H. H. was most enthusiastic about the work of the Normal Department. In a speech at commencement exercises in 1900 he

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<sup>16</sup>As long as he was president, Cherry would not allow the organization of social fraternities and sororities at the school.

<sup>17</sup>Teachers College Heights, XIII (November, 1931), p. 13.



announced:

We have taught during the present school year about 400 Kentucky school teachers alone . . . and the teachers will teach over 26,000 of Kentucky's Lilliputians during the coming fall.

There is not one reason why we can't have 1,000 Kentucky teachers in this school, and if we reach this number we will indirectly train about 65,000 of Kentucky children.

A work of this kind cannot be planted on the dollar alone. Every dollar that the school has produced over and above an economical living for the past eight years has been turned back into the institution that it might be endowed with a greater capacity for good. Some of you have not understood its phenomenal growth. I believe this is one of the secrets. . . .<sup>18</sup>

This reference by Cherry to the training of teachers is most significant because during the next few years the emphasis gradually shifted from the business college to the normal school.

The curricula as announced by the Cherrys when they opened their school were quite flexible. It was the policy of the brothers to advertise instruction in almost everything that anyone might want and then provide the classes and instructors as they were needed. As a result of these practices some of the classes became quite large, enrolling 100 to 200 students, and the work load of the faculty was often quite heavy. Many instructors taught as many as nine classes per day, five days per week, and were in addition in charge of laboratories, debating societies and other clubs. This experience probably influenced Cherry's later thinking as far as teacher loads, and he sometimes spent money for physical facilities when additional faculty were needed more.

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<sup>18</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 85.

Although the emphasis in the school had shifted to the training of teachers, there was little instruction of a professional nature offered. In 1901 these were the stated objectives of the teachers courses:

The object sought in these departments is the best preparation of teachers for the work of the schoolroom. The training is broad in its character, embracing such points as: (1) A thorough and sufficient knowledge of the subject matter to be imparted, (2) A masterly grasp upon the principles that underlie the right organization and arrangement of schools, (3) The latest and most approved methods of teaching the various subjects, (4) A systematic study of the principles that may be applied in the discipline of the school room.<sup>19</sup>

The last three of the above objectives are specifically aimed at providing professional training for teachers. But the background of most of the students enrolling in the Southern Normal School was so poor that the instruction started with the first objective and seldom got beyond it in the short time the students remained in school.<sup>20</sup> Much of the work done was of an elementary nature and actually very little of it was above the high school level, since the number of high schools in the state was limited and very few of the students entering the Southern Normal had any schooling beyond the eighth grade.

Under the leadership of the Cherry Brothers, the Southern Normal School and Bowling Green Business University developed slowly.

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<sup>19</sup>The Southern Educator (Publication of the Southern Normal School, January, 1901), p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 94.

In an advertising booklet put out by the town of Bowling Green in 1894, the Cherry Brothers had an advertisement for their school, but no mention was made of it when the town elsewhere in the booklet gave a description of the educational facilities it had to offer. Evidently the brothers' school was still not considered important enough by the town to be included among the educational advantages. By 1900 the town's attitude apparently had changed. During the winter and spring of 1900 the Park City Times and the Bowling Green News carried several articles complimenting the Cherry Brothers and their school. One article praised the brothers in these words:

Among the young men of Warren County who have made a brilliant success of life, Cherry Brothers, of this city and county, stand among the foremost. Beginning life with a capital made up mostly of brain, brawn, and bundles of energy, they have gone on and on until they stand today among the leading educators of the country.<sup>21</sup>

Probably one of the biggest reasons for the town's changed attitude toward the brothers' school was revealed in another article appearing in the Bowling Green News. The paper pointed out that "The Normal School is bringing thousands and thousands of dollars to Bowling Green every year. The people appreciate the fact that day by day the institution is gaining new friends."<sup>22</sup> The Green and the Gold, a paper published by the young ladies of Potter College, a girls school in Bowling Green, had this to say:

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<sup>21</sup>Clipping from the Park City Times in H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>22</sup>Clipping from the Bowling Green News in H. H. Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

[The] Cherry Brothers are born managers and are very persistent in their attempts to build up a school that would be a credit to any city, and of which Bowling Green is deservedly proud.<sup>23</sup>

As a school proprietor, H. H. was a promoter, a builder and a leader. Within a few years the Southern Normal School had become one of the fastest growing private institutions in the South. All the while H. H. was busy conducting an intensive advertising program to create interest in the school.

In his history of Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Cornette noted that in Bowling Green the Cherry brothers' school might have been experiencing a feeble beginning, but in its advertisements it was already full-grown and going strong.<sup>24</sup> Some of the brothers' students in later years teased them by charging that the same students were shifted from room to room as pictures were taken of the various departments for the advertising circulars. Speaking of these difficult beginnings, T. C. said, "We boasted everything on paper although we didn't have much in fact."<sup>25</sup>

One of the principal advertising agencies of the school was The Southern Educator. This paper, ranging from eight to sixteen pages, was printed quarterly and had a wide circulation. Its columns, in addition to singing the praises of the Southern Normal, always carried an appeal for the names of additional young men and women who might desire to enroll in the school. The growth in the

<sup>23</sup>From The Green and the Gold published by Potter College for Girls (Copy in vertical file, Western Kentucky University Library), p. 25.

<sup>24</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

circulation of the bulletin gives some indication of the increasing success of the school. In July, 1899, the circulation was 17,000; by October of the same year it had grown to 30,000 as Cherry stepped up his advertising, and by November, 1905, circulation had reached 40,000.<sup>26</sup>

It was Cherry's firm belief that the only way to build up a large private educational institution was to put on an intensive advertising campaign which would attract students by the hundreds. Then he would provide these students with as capable a faculty and as adequate facilities of instruction as the finances of the school would permit. During the years from 1892 to 1906, it appears that Cherry and everyone else connected with the Southern Normal School made every effort to increase the enrollment of the school. Every dollar cleared above operating expenses and a meager existence for the Cherry brothers was put back into the school, primarily in expanded advertising.<sup>27</sup> Later Cherry would use the same techniques employed to promote his private school to sell the Western Normal to both prospective students and to state legislators.

Cherry recruited students for his school in every way imaginable. He visited almost every county in the state by horse and buggy and told the young people of the advantages of an education at his school, and one to three representatives of the school were kept in the field recruiting much of the time. He sent hundreds of letters to prospective students and wrote to former students and

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 76-77.

friends requesting the names and addresses of potential enrollees. The magazines and newspapers of the area were filled with advertisements of the Cherry brothers' school. One page of the Glasgow Times of November 7, 1902, had no fewer than six advertisements signed by H. H. Cherry. In his advertising Cherry assured prospective students that his school solicited their patronage on the basis of merit and resorted to no questionable methods to assure their enrollment. He wrote to one prospective student, saying:

If you come to our school and enter upon a course of study and do not say at the expiration of your term that everything is just as it is advertised, and even better, we shall not charge you one cent for your tuition.<sup>28</sup>

Cherry assured students that after attending the Southern Normal School or Bowling Green Business University, they would have no difficulty finding jobs.

Under Cherry's leadership the school grew steadily and its reputation spread. In November, 1899, the brothers suffered a devastating blow when their classroom building burned, but H. H. quickly made arrangements to hold classes in downtown business establishments and not a single recitation was missed. Before nightfall of the day the building burned, he had organized a building corporation of prominent citizens, and by the following September, a new building had been erected.

Students came to Bowling Green in ever increasing numbers to enroll in the Southern Normal and Business University. From its

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<sup>28</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to Richie Grisson, October 29, 1902, in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

beginning with twenty-eight students, the school grew quickly to an enrollment of around 300 in 1894-95, and two years later this number had doubled. By the school year of 1900-01, the enrollment had reached 1,000 and never dropped below this mark as long as the school remained in operation. During the fourteen years the Cherry brothers operated the school, between nine and ten thousand students attended the institution. As a result of the school's growth, by 1902 Cherry could write in his advertisements: "We have, beyond any comparison, the largest, oldest and most prosperous institution of this kind South of the Ohio River."<sup>29</sup> "The Southern Normal School and Bowling Green Business College are two of the greatest schools of their kind in the South," he wrote in the Glasgow Times. "During the year just closed more than 1,000 boarding students matriculated and the general manager (Cherry himself) of the institution is now certain that the daily enrollment next year will reach 1,200 students."<sup>30</sup>

The normal school was now Cherry's real interest, and he was constantly urging the teachers of the state to consider the fine work that was being done by the Southern Normal School. He pointed out that the school had won an enviable reputation for its thorough and practical work and assured potential enrollees that an ambitious teacher could secure teaching certificates by attending the Southern Normal. "Hundreds of Kentucky teachers have done so," he said.

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<sup>29</sup>Clipping, Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>30</sup>Glasgow Times, November 7, 1902.

"This school makes a specialty of training teachers."<sup>31</sup> In his circular for 1904, Cherry noted:

The present demand for more and better qualified teachers is constant and urgent. . . . The writer has visited nearly every county in Kentucky and has been repeatedly asked to aid in securing competent teachers for good schools. In nearly every county there is a manifest movement to secure longer terms of school and better pay for qualified teachers, while the unanimous consensus is that "The unqualified teacher is dear at any price."<sup>32</sup>

Since he had at heart the training of teachers and many of his students were those preparing to teach, Cherry never put money first. In the early years of his institution's history, he accepted all sorts of farm produce in lieu of tuition, and he was always the friend of the poor but ambitious student. He took great pleasure in pointing out that:

A close investigation by all interested in education will prove the Southern Normal School is one of the pre-eminent of the kind in America and holds out opportunities for advancement not to be found in the majority of colleges, especially so to the young ladies and young men of limited means.<sup>33</sup>

Cornette noted that most of the students of the Southern Normal came from poorer homes and would have been unable to attend the more expensive private schools. They came to Southern Normal to get as much education as they could in the short time their meager funds

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<sup>31</sup>Circular in Cherry's scrapbook for 1902-04, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>32</sup>Circular for 1904, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>33</sup>Brochure in Cherry's scrapbook for 1906, Kentucky Building Library.



would keep them in school. Cherry could sympathize with those students because he had had the same experience.<sup>34</sup>

By the time Cherry's school had reached this stage of development, he had already formulated many of the basic principles and ideas which were to guide him in his future educational endeavors. He was at the same time both an idealist and a realist. He was an idealist in that he had tremendous ambitions and dreams; yet was a realist in that he was a man of very practical action. He was a dreamer, but not an impractical dreamer because he always kept his feet on the ground. In him were combined the qualities of both the visionary and the practical builder. He was always looking to the future, but he worked to achieve what he could at the present.

As a youth Cherry had been frail, sickly and unusually shy, but with age, he became stouter and overcame his former shyness. As a mature man he had a sharp, ascetic face, steady eyes, which burned with a sort of unearthly fire, long dark hair, poor teeth, a strong voice and was a careful dresser. He was a restless man, possessing great mental and physical energy which stimulated those among whom he worked; and he had a fierce determination matched only by his unbounded energy. He could probably have succeeded at most anything to which he set his mind. He found it hard to relax, and vacation was a word foreign to his vocabulary. He was never plagued by doubts, but had an unyielding conviction of the everlasting truth of what he said and never for one moment doubted the justice of his

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<sup>34</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 95.

cause. He took no stock in the idea that problems, if left alone, would solve themselves. He preferred instead to meet the issues as they arose and he apparently never tried to avoid a controversy. He was always fighting, fighting fairly, but fighting hard.<sup>35</sup> Yet at the same time he was kindly and chivalrous and generous in victory. His was a life of contradictions--vagueness and clarity clashed in him, as did aristocracy and democracy. He had a sort of aloofness and yet he loved to be with people. He believed in the potential greatness of every man and woman, and he felt that every individual should have the opportunity to develop his potential. He believed strongly that education was essential to full development of the individual. He once stated, "The most pitiful thing in life is a man with a gamefish upon a rotten line, or an individual well-developed but poorly prepared."<sup>36</sup>

In spite of his busy career, Cherry was also active in family and community affairs. In April, 1896, he was married to Bessie Fayne, a former student in his school, and they had three children, Josephine, Elizabeth and Hardin. According to Cornette, Cherry was a liberal and indulgent father and husband.<sup>37</sup> H. H.'s favorite diversions were camping and swimming, and he managed to find time to engage in these pastimes with his family. A leader in community affairs, Cherry was an active member of the Democratic party, a member and steward of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a member

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<sup>35</sup>Clipping from Courier-Journal in Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>36</sup>As quoted in the Bowling Green Times-Journal, June 25, 1932.

<sup>37</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 79.

of Bowling Green's exclusive civic group, the XV Club.

Cherry was an able executive, and although he always consulted the faculty, even on minor matters, he did not hesitate to make the final decision himself. His friends honored and trusted him completely, and those working with him were extremely loyal. The Bowling Green Messenger said:

All recognize that Dr. Cherry is at the head of the institution, and that his word is law. But his rule is a rule of love rather than a rule of tyranny. There is no one connected with the school from janitor to headmaster who would not fight for Cherry.<sup>38</sup>

One might say that Cherry ran his school as a benevolent despot.

According to one close friend, Cherry was allergic to watches, poetry and fiction, and possessed an odd sense of humor. He was a forceful speaker, booming out his words in a strong, deep voice; and his speeches were moving and inspiring, but generally not too factual. Defeat did not embitter Cherry; he never recognized it as being permanent but simply pressed on toward other goals. He was seldom pessimistic, and gloom and despondency had no place in his life. The Greek philosopher Epictetus was Cherry's favorite and he quoted him often. Epictetus taught that man's greatest possession was his purpose in life. According to him, man achieved his own interests only by contributing to the general welfare of others. This philosophy appealed to Cherry because to him life was much more than simply existing. He wanted to do things--things that would

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<sup>38</sup>Bowling Green Messenger, February 20, 1914.

benefit the general public. He had a passion to serve the weak and helpless, and he was always interested in helping poor boys and girls get an education. The dominant motive of his life was service to others. It appears that Cherry had also probably read Carlyle, because like Carlyle he placed great emphasis on activity, practical life and practical duties. His constant theme was produce, produce! He was never satisfied with what he had already accomplished. For him, stagnation was death--activity was life.

Democracy and education were two of Cherry's most frequent themes. In his book entitled Education: The Basis of Democracy, he gave his interpretation of the relationship between education and democracy when he wrote:

Education and Democracy are "members of one another," inevitably and inextricably bound together. . . . The first duty of Democracy and its first necessity are to provide for training which will safeguard the health, guarantee the intelligence, and promote the integrity of its citizens.<sup>39</sup>

"The mission of democracy," said Cherry, "is to inspire citizens to noble deeds and to give every person a chance to live, a chance to grow, and an opportunity to be prosperous and happy."<sup>40</sup> It is the duty of democracy to provide the training for its citizens that will protect their rights and freedoms. "Democracy," he said, "never intended that a single human being should be neglected by Society."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>H. H. Cherry, Education: The Basis of Democracy (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1926), pp. 47-48.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>41</sup>Speech by Cherry, copy in Vertical File, Cherry folder, Western Kentucky University Library.

He once wrote:

Representative democracies become more and more popular as the people advance in intelligence and secure a higher order of civilization. Universal education is the worst foe that ever confronted kings, princes, sultans, and czars.<sup>42</sup>

One of the reasons democracy was so appealing to Cherry was that it invited a "contest between ideas." He stated:

There is no music so sweet in a Democracy as the singing of a spinning idea as it passes through the universe; . . . there is no limit to the sphere of ideas. The citizen who creates a superior idea . . . is a patriot who plants the flag on the hills of liberty.<sup>43</sup>

Along this same line in his book, Our Civic Image, Cherry said, "A lofty idea travels ahead of a successful life."<sup>44</sup> Cherry, himself, was a great "idea" man, always looking to the future and making plans for new undertakings. It was always the things he did not have that challenged him, and he was a great optimist who always expected to move on to greater achievements.

Cherry believed that education was extremely important in a democracy. He was convinced that government by the consent of the governed demanded a government built upon a system of education that developed ideals of justice and service. He felt that we could not have free, enlightened citizens without free and efficient schools. He observed that the school was a citadel of freedom, a

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<sup>42</sup>H. H. Cherry, Our Civic Image (Bowling Green: Southern Educational Publishing Company, 1904), p. 79.

<sup>43</sup>Cherry, Education: The Basis for Democracy, pp. 86-87.

<sup>44</sup>Cherry, Our Civic Image, p. 32.

fundamental necessity to life, liberty and property, and it would be as easy for an individual to live in the center of the Sahara Desert without shelter and food as it would be for a free government to exist without moral, intellectual and physical support. No man can turn his back upon the school without turning his back upon his flag, and no man who is for his country, who is for the accomplishment of the ideals of a free democracy, can consistently be against the school, observed Cherry.<sup>45</sup> He said that without our educational system in the United States, imperfect as it was, we would long ago have suffered political and social chaos. The schools in a democracy, said Cherry, "are human nurseries where ideas grow and individualities flourish."<sup>46</sup> Take away education and we would have both moral and commercial bankruptcy.<sup>47</sup> The passion of his life was to raise the educational level of the citizens of his home state. A close friend once commented that when Cherry looked out his window and saw another student arriving, he knew the millenium was at hand.<sup>48</sup>

Cherry observed that the people all too often thought of education as something remote, something foreign to their own needs, something that concerned others. But education, he maintained, is the most personal thing in a free country, and the extent that the

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<sup>45</sup>Cherry, Education: The Basis for Democracy, p. 112.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>47</sup>Cherry, Our Civic Image, p. 79.

<sup>48</sup>Teachers College Heights (December, 1934), p. 21.

people fail to realize this and respond to the needs of the school can be measured in the failure of the schools to become a positive force in the development of a community. When the people understand that education reaches every phase of their <sup>lives</sup> ~~life~~, they will cease to be indifferent about it and will advance it for the same reason that they read a good book or eat a wholesome meal. The people have not always supported the schools because they regarded them as a tax. They must be shown that ignorance is a tax and that the school is an investment that pays two dividends, one in more life, and one in more property.<sup>49</sup> Cherry believed that one of the principal causes of indifference was the failure of the people to understand the material value of a good education. He sensed that once the people came to realize that education meant material dividends as well as improved minds, they would lose much of their indifference. According to him, a community that refused to make provisions for the school and vote a tax for its support was, as far as economic progress was concerned, a pauper. He wrote:

It is stupid, immoral, and unwise for any of the great commonwealths of our nation to refuse to provide ample means for the education of her children. It is shortsightedness for a people of any city or neighborhood who have an opportunity, to refuse to vote for an equitable tax that will give that city or neighborhood the advantage of the best schools. All things being equal, every state builds wisely and in harmony with the principles of democracy, when it appropriates money for the rural public

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<sup>49</sup>Kentucky Public Documents: Superintendent's Report for 1915-1917, p. 526.

school, graded school, high school, state normal school, university and other public institutions.<sup>50</sup>

According to Cherry, the state had no duty of more importance than the development of an educational system, and the progressive state looked after this matter carefully.<sup>51</sup>

We get some insight into Cherry's dedication to the normal school idea when we look at his philosophy concerning teachers. He saw the school teacher as a sort of talent scout. Our teachers, he said, are our army of inspectors who must discover those individuals with talent and ability and stimulate them forward. For Cherry the teacher was indispensable, and the only way to get along without them was to abolish the schools. The development of a qualified and efficient corps of teachers was essential to the success of any state. According to him, the teachers made the schools, and the state that had the teachers had the schools. He said you might have modern school houses, longer school terms, local taxation, consolidation and all the other things that go into a well-ordered school system, but without the services of qualified teachers all these will fail. He stated:

We may champion various methods of educational reform to find, in the end, that the qualified teacher marches at the head of educational progress. . . . It is dangerous for educational reform to reach the school ahead of a trained and reformed teacher.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Cherry, Our Civic Image, p. 83.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>52</sup>Kentucky Public Documents: Superintendent's Report for 1915-1917, p. 525.



The teacher, he noted, was the transmitter through which every dollar spent on education must be transformed into life. If the transmitter was no good, then the child could not hear. He observed: "A free nation will never be greater than her citizens, her citizens will never be greater than her schools, and her schools will never be greater than her teachers."<sup>53</sup>

Cherry felt that the single greatest educational problem in the state was the inadequate supply of competent teachers. He contended:

Give Kentucky teachers of scholarship, who possess the contagion of personality, magnetism of soul, and who rule with the sword of the spirit, and all educational problems will be solved and Kentucky will experience a new birth. Kentucky's educational troubles will vanish before teachers who learn, who love, who serve.<sup>54</sup>

On another occasion he wrote:

. . . build and equip a modern school building in every community in the Commonwealth, adopt courses of study that will prepare for the work of life, and employ teachers who have the teacher's vision and the teacher's preparation; and the Commonwealth will experience a new moral, intellectual and industrial birth.<sup>55</sup>

"Millions of dollars have been squandered upon inefficient teaching," observed Cherry, "and this waste will continue until stopped through the development of a qualified and stable teaching profession." Any citizen who tries to improve the educational affairs of the

<sup>53</sup>Cherry, Education: The Basis of Democracy, p. 182.

<sup>54</sup>Typed MS, Cherry's personal scrapbook for 1906-07, p.3.

<sup>55</sup>Kentucky Public Documents: Superintendent's Report for 1915-1917, p. 528.

state but withholds support from those institutions and educational efforts designed for the training of teachers, proceeds on the assumption that the way to be rescued from a leaking boat is to enlarge the leak and sink the boat.<sup>56</sup>

Considering his views in regard to the teaching profession, it is easy to understand why Henry Hardin Cherry was such a strong advocate of state supported teacher training institutions and played such a key role in getting state normal schools in Kentucky.

Although he had a great respect for ideas and was himself a man with many ideas, Cherry was also a very practical man when it came to the promotion and achievement of his educational objectives. He would have objected vigorously, as do most educators, to any talk about the "politics of education" or to being called a "politician." Nonetheless, he had a deep appreciation and understanding of the political process, and he did not hesitate to put this knowledge to work effectively in promoting his educational objectives. A newspaper writer once asserted:

Dr. Cherry was a politician, keen, incisive, alert, but no mere politician is meet to master the traditions that flourished about him and absorb them. He was a master manipulator of politicians when the future of Western was at stake. He knew how to gain the ear of those who held the purse strings of the state, and his deftness loosed those strings for making the Hill the incarnation, the epitome of his dreams.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Cherry Speech, Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>57</sup>Clipping, Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

Cherry did certainly, as far as his methods of operation, possess many of the qualities associated with the politician. He stood for the maximum of good with the minimum of strife, and his methods of achieving his goals were sometimes unorthodox. If the phrase "the ends justify the means" did not have such a bad connotation, it would be very appropriate for describing many of Cherry's actions. He always kept the "end" in mind and drove as directly toward his goal as possible, concentrating on the "means" at hand. Although he was a strong individualist, Cherry recognized the potency of organized action, and he put this to work in accomplishing many of his goals, especially that of state normal schools. He seldom overlooked the value of a little pressure properly applied. If seeking aid from the state or federal government, the telephone and telegraph lines out of Bowling Green hummed with appeals and arguments to those in positions of authority. When he went to Frankfort to try to get his private normal school converted into a state normal school, Cherry carried with him a petition over sixty feet long, containing over 1,000 signatures.

In his operations he made surprisingly few mistakes, and he had a knack for foreseeing obstacles and figuring out ways to skirt them. He very seldom came away from an encounter completely defeated. When the opposing forces became too strong, he would accept a compromise which salvaged as much as possible from the situation. He was always ready to compromise on anything except his principles. One of the best examples of this ability was the normal school legislation passed in 1906. Cherry went to Frankfort to get a single normal school located in Bowling Green; but when he encountered

strong opposition from the Richmond forces and it appeared his objective was in danger, he agreed to a compromise plan whereby two normal schools were provided for with one of the two schools being located in Bowling Green.

Because of his deep interest in democracy, Cherry had a healthy respect for public opinion. He once said, "The most powerful force in a Democracy is the unwritten law of public opinion."<sup>58</sup> He observed that honest public officials had frequently undertaken projects aimed at promoting the general welfare only to find in the end that they were helpless to accomplish their goal because they lacked the support of favorable public sentiment. Cherry, however, had faith that the public would respond favorable and support earnest and unselfish efforts in their behalf. So when he entered the drive for state normal schools and later as president of one of these schools, much of his time was spent in developing public interest and support. He had a remarkable ability to gain the ear of both the public and the state legislature. The first, of course, is tantamount to the latter.

Since he held public opinion to be such a vital force in a democracy, Cherry was a strong believer in political organization and effective campaigning. He had no use for the petty, partisan type of political bickering, but he felt that when managed in the interest of the public, party organization was good. As permanent

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<sup>58</sup>Cherry, Our Civic Image, p. 95.

chairman of the Democratic party's state convention in 1915, Cherry told the delegates, "Party organization is inherent in a democracy and it is a fundamental necessity to social and industrial development."<sup>59</sup> He said that without political organizations through which to express the public will, it would be almost impossible in a democracy to promote effectively issues that involved the general welfare, to determine the desires of the people and to place responsibility for the administration of government.<sup>60</sup> So during much of his adult life, he was an active participant in party affairs, twice running for the Democratic nomination for governor.

Because of his political activities, Cherry sometimes encountered criticism, but his pragmatism and political acumen undoubtedly enhanced his effectiveness in promoting the growth and development of the Western State Normal School. The succeeding chapter will reveal more fully Cherry's techniques and their relationship to the political process.

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<sup>59</sup>H. M. Cherry, Speech in the Democratic Campaign Book, 1915 (Democratic State Committee, 1915), p. 197.

<sup>60</sup>Cherry, Our Civic Image, p. 96.

## CHAPTER VI

### College President and Politician

In some respects it was quite proper that the Board of Regents for Western Kentucky State Normal School should select as president of that institution Henry Hardin Cherry. As one of the most ~~agres-~~<sup>2</sup>sive and outspoken proponents of teacher training, he had played a key role in the founding of the state normals. He had probably done more than any other individual in the state to focus public attention upon the need for such institutions. It is impossible to determine to what extent Cherry was responsible for the campaign undertaken by the Educational Improvement Commission, but certainly he was one of the most active members of the Commission's executive committee. E.-E. Hume, ~~chairman of the executive committee~~, said of Cherry's selection:

The indefatigable energy and indomitable will of Professor H. H. Cherry, of Bowling Green, is a matter of history in the educational annals of the state. No one who knows him, or who knows of his work in building up the Southern Normal School, will ever doubt the wisdom of his selection as a member of this important committee.<sup>1</sup>

Those familiar with Cherry and his ideas will recognize the objectives sought by the Commission as being goals long advocated by him, and in the publicity campaign conducted by the educational forces in 1905 and 1906 there are several indications that much of it was

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<sup>1</sup>Glasgow Times, June 30, 1905.

probably inspired by the man who had been responsible for the highly effective advertising of the Southern Normal School. Furthermore Cherry spent almost two months in Frankfort lobbying for the normal school bill, and E. H. Shelman, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said Cherry, Hume and Winfrey appeared before his committee to urge passage of the measure.<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly one would be safe in saying that H. H. Cherry was one of the most influential leaders in the drive for public normal schools, and certainly to him must go most of the credit for getting one of the schools located in Bowling Green.

Academically Cherry had virtually no qualifications for a college presidency. He had attended the Southern Normal School for a few years and that was the extent of his formal education.<sup>3</sup> He had proved himself to be an able administrator by taking over the Southern Normal School with about thirty students and developing it into one of the outstanding private normal schools in the South. And, as the years would prove, the Board of Regents probably could not have made a wiser choice for the presidency politically because it was in this realm that Cherry proved himself to be most effective. The president of a state institution of higher learning must perform many roles, but two of his most important tasks are to sell his institution and its needs to the public and to the state legislature. In these two areas Cherry was most effective as we shall see in

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<sup>2</sup>Glasgow Times, November 2, 1906.

<sup>3</sup>Cherry was granted an honorary LL. D. degree by the University of Kentucky in 1917 and this accounts for his title of Doctor.

tracing the development of the school.

The transition from the private Southern Normal to the public Western Kentucky State Normal was made very smoothly. In fact there was little change in the operation of the school since the president, faculty, student body and buildings of the Southern Normal became the president, faculty, student body and buildings of the Western State Normal. As president of the new state normal Cherry continued to use many of the same techniques he had used in operating his own school.

One of the first things he set out to do was to build up the enrollment of the school as rapidly as possible. Since the original appropriation for the normals made no provision for advertising, Cherry paid the costs of advertising Western Normal the first year himself. (He wasn't fully reimbursed until 1918.) He was constantly on the alert for means of recruiting additional students. He toured the state himself urging students to come to Western, and in the fall he sent faculty members to visit the rural schools to encourage students to attend the normal. The student body of the normal was organized into county delegations and these groups met with faculty advisors periodically. One of the topics suggested for discussion at the meetings of the county delegations was the plans of the high school graduates in the students' home counties. Cherry suggested that it might be a good idea to collect the names of *the members of* the present senior classes in the various schools represented.<sup>4</sup> He repeatedly urged the faculty to engage in activities and make

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<sup>4</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, November 19, 1923.



outside contacts, as this would help promote the success of the institution. At one of its early meetings, the Board of Regents also joined the effort, adopting a resolution stating:

. . . we most respectfully and earnestly petition the different County Superintendents of the Western Normal School District of Kentucky to use every means within their power to influence prospective students of their respective counties to use the full quota of free scholarships allowed these counties.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, President Cherry was instructed to write each superintendent explaining the importance of using all the scholarships available. Cherry's success in building up the enrollment of the school is indicated by the fact that five years after its inception it ranked among the largest state normals in the nation and in 1933-34 was the largest teachers' college in the country in terms of enrollment. Cherry's motive for seeking large enrollments was two-fold. He wanted to see more young people acquire a college education, and the more students he had in his institution, the stronger his claim upon the state legislature for larger appropriations.

There was one major difference between the Southern Normal and the Western State Normal, however. The former was a private school; the latter was a public school and a child of the state legislature. No one appreciated this significant difference more than Cherry, and his every action was designed to promote the school's standing with the general public and especially with the General Assembly. He was a most astute public relations man and he put this ability to work effectively to promote the Western Normal.

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<sup>5</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, November 25, 1907.

Realizing that his school was highly dependent upon the support of the public and the legislature, Cherry was always careful to try to avoid involvement in matters that might reflect unfavorably upon the school. Along this line the minutes for a faculty meeting held October 15, 1907, noted that:

. . . President Cherry brought up the question of keeping the school entirely out of the present and future political contests. He emphasized [sic] the importance of this fact, and at the same time insisted on each member of the faculty exercising his right to belong to either or any party desired. His point was that nothing should be done that would bring the institution into any political contest or discussion.<sup>6</sup>

The reason for Cherry's raising this topic was the fact that the normal schools had become an issue in the campaign between M. O. Winfrey and E. C. Gullion for the Democratic nomination for State Superintendent. Winfrey charged that Gullion was aligned with forces in Lexington who were opposed to the normal schools, referring to James K. Patterson and his allies, and said his defeat in the primary would jeopardize the future of the State Normals.<sup>7</sup> Cherry did not desire to involve his school in a political dispute at this time which might endanger its future existence. Yet on various occasions he later encouraged faculty and students to engage in active efforts to promote legislation in the interest of the school.

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<sup>6</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, October 15, 1907.

<sup>7</sup>Glasgow Times, November 1, 1906.

Cherry used every means available to expand and promote the Western Normal and its programs. Every person available, from faculty member to student, became an agent of the school, and every public meeting in the community became a forum from which Cherry could further his ideas and policies. His techniques were at the same time both bold and quite subtle. He carried on a voluminous correspondence—with the state legislators, local civic and political leaders, anyone whom he felt could lend support to his cause. Typical of his appeals is this excerpt from a letter written to a friend in 1909:

If the proposed plant of the Western Normal is ever achieved, it will have to be accomplished through a public sympathy, an ~~effes~~-sive public opinion, an active patriotism. I am counting on you to aid us in creating this sentiment. I hope you will have an opportunity to speak to your legislators concerning the great work of the Western Normal. This whole scheme is projected in the interest of the children of Kentucky.<sup>8</sup>

This illustration shows quite well Cherry's effective use of propaganda techniques and his subtlety. He was a frequent user of the glittering generality—"an active patriotism"—and other such emotional appeals. Who, for example, can be against, or even ignore, "the interest of the children of Kentucky"? Note also that Cherry does not actually request the person to contact his legislators, but rather "suggests" this. A spontaneous contact rather than a solicited one is much more effective. Letters similar to this one went to people throughout the state.

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<sup>8</sup>Letter from H. M. Cherry to Robert Broach, 1909, Scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

Numerous other techniques were employed by Cherry in building up support for his institution. As the saying goes, "he never missed a trick" when it came to efforts to gain a few more friends for his school or to enhance its influence and prestige in the state and community. For example, he used the school's purchase of equipment and supplies to this end. On at least one occasion he told the Board of Regents he felt that purchases by the school should to the fullest extent possible be made from Bowling Green and Kentucky businesses. Cherry, of course, realized you don't buy friends, but he knew these businesses appreciated the school's patronage and would be more inclined to support it if it ~~was~~<sup>were</sup> a customer.

Cherry also devoted substantial amounts of time to cultivating the support of various groups and organizations. Any type of mass meeting from a farmers' chautauqua to a conference of professional educators was a likely target for Cherry. He made the Western campus available for all sorts of conferences and conventions, and he certainly did not overlook these as a means of extending the school's influence. He was usually on hand to see that the proper topics came up for discussion and that those attending these meetings were properly charged to go forth as missionaries of the normal schools.

Even the student body was put to use as a means of expanding the influence of the school. The several county delegations into which the student body had been organized met frequently with faculty advisors and it was suggested by Cherry that:

Necessary and proposed legislation should be discussed and proper sentiment created. Students should know their Senators and Representatives and should also know what influence

in their respective counties can be brought to bare [sic] effectively.<sup>9</sup>

Other meetings were used in the same manner. Since his school existed primarily for the training of teachers, Cherry felt that one of the best ways to get them enrolled was to interest their employers in what the school had to offer. Thus he devoted a considerable amount of time to building up support among the principals and superintendents of the schools in his district. At the same time this was quite advantageous to Cherry and his school in that these individuals were often social and political leaders in their communities and therefore could exert a great deal of influence on public opinion and upon the state legislature. That Cherry was aware of this is indicated in his call for all county superintendents in the Western Normal District to attend one of the Annual Superintendent's Conferences:

Allow me to urge the Superintendents to come prepared to discuss those vital problems that are now confronting them in the field, and to be ready to consider needed school legislation and what the County Superintendents can do in securing effective education legislation.<sup>10</sup>

To encourage attendance, the Board of Regents usually authorized the payment of the expenses incurred by educators attending the Annual Conference of County Superintendents, and occasionally also paid their expenses to the annual Educational Conference and Convocation held on the Western Campus. The following resolutions adopted by

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<sup>9</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, November 19, 1923.

<sup>10</sup>Southern School Journal, February, 1923, p. 9.

the Fourth Conference of County Superintendents held in May, 1910,  
bear witness to Cherry's influence at these meetings:

.....  
6. We realize the immediate or ultimate failure of every school presided over by a poorly educated and poorly trained teacher. Therefore, we most emphatically declare in favor of our State Normal School(s) as the best possible agencies for preparing qualified teachers to preside over our common, village and high schools.

7. We urge all friends of educational progress in the state to use their influence for the advancement of the efficiency of the State Normal Schools of Kentucky.

8. We desire in an especial manner to express our approval and appreciation for the work already done by the Western Kentucky State Normal; to certify to the increased spirit, zeal and efficiency of our teachers who have attended the State Normal and to urge upon those expecting to teach the necessity of such thorough education and training as our Western Kentucky State Normal gives.<sup>11</sup>

Starting in 1935 Western also held an annual "Fish Fry" for the superintendents and other educators. This was an informal affair which provided an opportunity for the educators to get to know one another and to talk over programs and policies. Cherry was well aware of the fact that these educators were usually well respected in their communities and could wield a great deal of influence. So he did everything that he could to enlist them in his cause. That he was quite active in such efforts is indicated by the fact that on occasion he was criticized for efforts to prevent the

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<sup>11</sup>From copy of the resolutions found in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

selection of superintendents who were not supporters of his goals.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of his early warning against involvement in political contests which might embarrass the school, Cherry urged the faculty to be active in efforts to promote the school and policies which were in its interest. The Minutes of the Faculty for October 4, 1909, note, for example, that the faculty met in President Cherry's home for three hours and discussed proposed school legislation. This was not merely a discussion of the effect of proposed legislation on the school, but a discussion of what the faculty could do to help secure the passage of desired measures. At another meeting Cherry "made suggestions as to the necessity of faculty members making personal contact out in the various districts of the state in order to anticipate and secure proper legislation that will make Western a continued success."<sup>13</sup>

Most of Cherry's methods discussed thus far are what might be called "grass roots" lobbying. They were directed toward developing a widespread public sentiment favorable to the normal schools and to Western particularly. This sentiment would in turn, it was hoped, influence those who were responsible for making and carrying out the policies involving the schools. Cherry did not, however, rely on this approach alone, but also engaged extensively in more direct methods of promoting his objectives. Scattered throughout the minutes of the Board of Regents are authorizations for the payment

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<sup>12</sup>This charge was made by a Henry Bosworth supporter in the primary in 1915.

<sup>13</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, May 1, 1933.

of expenses incurred by Cherry and others while representing Western's interests before the General Assembly and sometimes in Washington, indicating that Cherry did a great deal of direct lobbying also. On March 31, 1910, for example, the Board agreed to pay expenses incurred, up to \$100, in efforts to get additional appropriations passed for Western.<sup>14</sup> On another occasion the Board voted to relieve President Cherry of the responsibility of appearing before the next session of the legislature "other than to appear before the proper committees," ~~and the~~ Members of the Board, especially W. J. Gooch, a former speaker of the State House of Representatives, and John P. Haswell ~~be~~ <sup>were</sup> authorized to make whatever visits to Frankfort ~~that~~ were necessary to "properly present the claims of the school."<sup>15</sup> Cherry always appeared before the Appropriations Committees himself, and on many occasions was in Frankfort most of the time the General Assembly was in session. Quite frequently he was accompanied by members of the Board of Regents or close friends who had a great deal of influence in the legislature. Cherry was always careful to acknowledge the efforts of others on behalf of the school. The Minutes of the Faculty note that Cherry:

. . . then expressed highly complimentary [sic] terms his appreciation for the work done by Dr. M. C. Ford during the regular and special sessions of the General Assembly and said that he hoped the faculty would show their appreciation for Dr. Ford's work.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, March 31, 1910.

<sup>15</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, November 17, 1911.

<sup>16</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, July 24, 1934.



At another time Cherry, in welcoming Senator Charles Franklin as a new member of the Board of Regents, thanked him for his work on behalf of Western during the last session of the legislature. At a meeting of the Board in July, 1934, Cherry noted that Western would give a testimonial dinner in honor of Rodes K. Myers, Representative Theron Johnson, Senator T. M. Ferguson, and Dr. H. C. Ford, a Western alumnus who was being groomed by Cherry as his successor in the presidency, for their service during the last session of the General Assembly.<sup>17</sup>

Another favorite tactic frequently employed by Cherry was to invite members of the state legislature to visit the Western campus and view firsthand the "great work" that was being done there on behalf of the state. He felt that if the legislators saw for themselves the work being done they would be a bit more willing to vote funds for the school, and on several occasions members returned to Frankfort after a visit to Bowling Green and approved sizeable appropriations for the schools.

Cherry also used his reports to the State Superintendents of Public Instruction as a forum for promoting his school with the members of the legislature. As a public speaker Cherry was often quite emotional and made little use of factual material. The opposite was true of his reports to the Superintendent; they virtually bristled with facts and figures on enrollments, costs per pupil, number of former students now teaching in the state, etc. In his report for 1912-13, for example, he pointed out that there were 189 normal schools in the United States and that more than 150 of these

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<sup>17</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, July 14, 1934.

were established a number of years prior to Western; yet, Western, in point of attendance, now ranked fourth in the nation. He wrote:

If the teacher is the most important item in an efficient school system, you will pardon me if I should in this connection emphasize the result accomplished by the Western Normal. We hope we will not be immodest if we should believe that the success of the Western Normal is almost unprecedented in educational history.<sup>18</sup>

He pointed out that in six years and seven months Western had enrolled 9,179 students; 90% of them were now engaged in teaching. These teachers, he said, had come into contact with approximately 375,000 children, 75% of them in rural areas.<sup>19</sup>

This, of course, was judging the success of the school on the basis of numbers alone; but this was the criterion used by most of the legislators and much of the general public. This is borne out quite well by the report of a committee appointed by the legislature in 1914 to investigate the operations of the state's institutions of higher learning. This committee pointed out that Western had a payroll of \$63,000 while the State University, with fewer students, had a payroll of about \$145,000; teachers at Western taught six hours per day while teachers at the State University taught only three hours and twelve minutes per day; and the number of students per teacher at Western was 30.1, at Eastern 18.3, and at State University 10.3. The average attendance at the three schools was 1,315 at Western, 477 at Eastern, and 900 at the State University. Considering these statistics, the probe unit reported, "your committee

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<sup>18</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, 1912-13, Vol. 5, p. 486.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

is of the opinion that of all the public institutions investigated, the Western Kentucky Normal School presents a cleaner bill of health than any. . . ."<sup>20</sup> That this method of measuring the state's institutions of higher learning was shared by others is indicated by this statement from the Owensboro Messenger congratulating Western on its clean bill of health:

Cherry's teachers put in nearly twice the hours of labor, draw one third as much pay, instruct more pupils per teacher and show much better deportment in their students than some other state institutions.<sup>21</sup>

So, when Cherry filled out his reports with figures on growing enrollments and low costs per pupil, he was telling the legislature and much of the public what they wanted to hear. Cherry, being the astute politician that he was, was certainly aware of this.

One of Cherry's first major tasks on becoming president of one of the State Normal Schools was to improve the schools' relations with the State College in Lexington. Cherry feared that if the State College and the two newly formed State Normals spent all their time bickering with one another, they would not get what they wanted from the state legislature. So in the fall of 1907, he proposed a meeting at which the three schools could talk over their respective needs and plan their legislative strategy. Acting on the basis of this suggestion, Dr. E. E. Hume, chairman of the executive committee of the Education Improvement Commission, invited representatives of the two Normals, the State College, the Federation of Women's

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<sup>20</sup>Courier-Journal, February 19, 1914.

<sup>21</sup>Clipping in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

Clubs and the Educational Improvement Commission to a conference in Louisville. Meeting in the Galt House on November 19, 1907, the conferees, after extensive discussion, were finally able to reach an agreement including the following points: the name of the State College would be changed to Kentucky State University and it would be established as a university of the standard grade; the Normal Department at the State College would be replaced by a Department of Education; all sub-freshman work at the State University would be eliminated; diplomas of the state normals should constitute evidence of qualification to teach; and a joint legislative committee would inspect the three schools, agree upon the proper appropriation for each and they would all work together for the passage of this proposed legislation. Judge A. T. Lafferty and Tibis Carpenter, representing the State College; Judge Jere A. Sullivan and Phil Grinstead, representing the Eastern Normal; and J. Whit Potter and Judge H. K. Cole, representing Western, were selected as members of the legislative committee. This committee visited all three schools and in their final meeting on the Western campus agreed unanimously on requests of \$200,000 for the State College and \$150,000 each for Eastern and Western in addition to the schools' annual appropriations. Judge Lafferty, Judge Sullivan and President Cherry were appointed to draft a bill incorporating these proposals and were to meet with the State Superintendent concerning the passage of this legislative program.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Hamlett, op. cit., p. 286.

Before the legislative session of 1908, Superintendent J. G. Crabbe launched the first of his "Whirlwind Campaigns" on behalf of better education in the state. During a nine-day period, twenty-nine speakers toured the state giving over three hundred public addresses heard by over 60,000 people. The result was a greatly aroused public sentiment in favor of educational improvement. One of the most effective speakers in this campaign was H. H. Cherry of the Western Normal.

The legislature of 1908 has sometimes been referred to as "The Educational Legislature" because of the significant educational legislation it enacted. Among the education bills approved was a measure changing the State College to a university. Under this legislation, the Normal School associated with the State College was replaced by a Department of Education. This was particularly pleasing to the new normal schools because it meant that the University could no longer offer sub-freshman work and this would mean more students for the normals. President Patterson was surprised by this move and was disturbed over the loss of students that this would mean for the University. He charged that this action reflected not the will of the people, but "the persistent jealousy and hostility of the Normal Schools established under the Act of 1906."<sup>23</sup>

Another bill was passed providing for the examination of students attending the Normals by the county boards of education in the counties where the Normals were located; thus eliminating the necessity for the students to make a trip home in May or June for

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<sup>23</sup>James Hopkins, op. cit., pp. 215-16.

the examination to be certified to teach. Also an Educational Commission was created to stimulate interest in educational improvement and the Sullivan Bill requiring the establishment of a public high school in every county in the state was adopted. House Bill 140 was approved providing the schools with the appropriations they had requested. So, the Normals came off quite well at the hands of the 1908 General Assembly: competition from the State University for sub-freshman students was reduced; certification of their students to teach was made easier; and the Sullivan Bill would swell their enrollments by stimulating the demand for trained teachers as the number of high schools increased. On the other hand, the Normals had not improved their relations with the State University by pressing for some of this legislation and this friction would continue to be a problem in public higher education for some time. In his report to the State Superintendent for 1909-11, Cherry noted there was still some antagonism present when he stated:

I challenge the statesmanship of the men who claim they help the public schools by opposing the Normal Schools. Any man who is against the efficient training of teachers is against an efficient school system.<sup>24</sup>

This situation did begin to improve somewhat during the next few years, however, as is indicated in the following excerpt from a letter by Henry S. Barker, who succeeded James K. Patterson as president of State University, to Cherry:

You need have no apprehension that I doubt the loyalty of the Western Normal School to the

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<sup>24</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, 1904-11, Vol. 2, p. 162.

University. I regard you as one of my staunchest supporters and I assure you that I am always ready and willing to uphold the cause of the Normal Schools. If no higher motive actuated me, I have wisdom enough to know that all the public educational interests of Kentucky must stand or fall together. If we have internal jealousies and bickerings, we are sure to fail of reaching the high usefulness which should be our aim. Nowhere is the state motto "United we stand, divided we fall," more applicable than to the public educational interests of the state.<sup>25</sup>

Cherry and his school played a key role in the "Whirlwind Campaign" of 1908. Many members of the faculty in addition to Cherry made numerous speeches and played an important part in stimulating interest in the educational proposals. The student body at Western was divided up and each member of the faculty met with students from several counties and advised them as to the proper procedure in soliciting the support of their Representatives and Senators for the desired legislation. Both the students and faculty members agreed to write letters to their respective Senators and Representatives.<sup>26</sup> Dr. Cherry went to Frankfort during the session and worked for the passage of the education bills, and when he returned to Bowling Green at midnight, February 21, three hundred students greeted him and carried him into the depot amid wild cheers.<sup>27</sup>

Following these legislative successes, Cherry wrote in his report for 1908-09:

The inauguration of a liberal educational policy in Kentucky is a statesmanship that will

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<sup>25</sup>Letter from Henry S. Barker to H. H. Cherry, October 12, 1911, Bound with minutes of Board of Regents.

<sup>26</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, January 23, 1908.

<sup>27</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 144.

reflect the far-seeing wisdom of the last two General Assemblies. . . . Let us cherish the hope that Kentucky will continue this aggressive policy until every child in Kentucky shall enjoy educational opportunities equal to those enjoyed by the children of the most advanced educational commonwealths in the nation.<sup>28</sup>

He said that in spite of some opposition from the shortsighted and selfish, the Normal Schools had begun their work and the state had thus far been liberal but had only made a beginning toward developing the Normals. These new schools provide more than teacher training, he noted; they reinforce every educational influence in the state. Turning his attention to his own school, Cherry said:

A conservative estimate shows that the goodwill of the Southern Normal School which was tendered the State of Kentucky as a part of the consideration for the location of the Western Normal in Bowling Green, based on attendance, has already been worth to the State of Kentucky more than \$70,000.<sup>29</sup>

He pointed out that there were only five normal schools in the whole country having larger enrollments than Western and called attention to the fact that the average cost per normal student nationwide was \$72.44 while at Western it was only \$43.86. He said there were schools having an attendance of 250 to 500 students with property worth \$400,000 to \$700,000 and incomes of \$70,000 to \$150,000 per year, and pointed out that his school, although much larger, got only \$50,000 annually. He used comparisons of his school with other teachers colleges to impress its success upon the state legis-

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<sup>28</sup>Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1908-09, p. 67.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 65.



lators and state officials, and he emphasized the fact that out of the 1,140 students currently enrolled, 999 had applied for free tuition thus indicating their intention to teach in Kentucky.<sup>30</sup> The Courier-Journal in November, 1909, carried an article noting that:

While President Cherry thinks that his institution has been liberally treated by the state in a financial way, the average of appropriations in other states is considerably above that for Kentucky.<sup>31</sup>

Cherry continued to keep busy building up support for his school and its programs, and he still ran advertisements in the newspapers promoting his school. He wrote to the presidents of the county delegations at the Teachers Institutes soliciting their help on behalf of the Normal and urging them to bring the merits of Western to the attention of the teachers attending. He wrote to the county superintendents saying:

We trust you are doing what you can to influence the teachers of your county to give themselves a wider preparation for the great work of teaching the Kentucky child. Generous Kentucky offers to pay the tuition of any teacher who enters the Western Normal for the purpose of preparing for an efficient service in the school room.<sup>32</sup>

Cherry's efforts paid off in steadily increasing numbers of enrollments, and it was not long before both he and the Board of Regents began to feel that the buildings and grounds of the old Southern Normal School were entirely too small to take care of the

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>31</sup>Courier-Journal, November, 1909, no exact date.

<sup>32</sup>"Paragraphs" (A leaflet printed by Cherry) January 26, 1909, Copy in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

future development of the school. They began to look around for a suitable future site, and in early 1909 negotiations were completed for the purchase of the grounds of Potter College which had recently suspended operations. The cost of the new grounds was \$102,031.76, more than two-thirds of the total amount appropriated by the last legislature for buildings and grounds. In spite of the fact that they had spent most of their appropriation for the new campus, President Cherry and the Board of Regents proceeded to draw up plans for a new administration building which would involve expenditure of more than twice the amount left over from the appropriation. This new building was completed at a cost of approximately \$125,000 which meant that Western had gone into debt about \$75,000. The Board of Regents and President Cherry expected the 1910 legislature to appropriate the funds to take care of this additional cost. When the General Assembly convened, Cherry and J. Whit Potter, member of the Board of Regents, went to Frankfort to see the appropriation of these funds. Cherry also sought to bring some pressure to bear on the legislature by addressing a letter to former students in which he urged them to write their legislators in support of the appropriations measure. He wrote:

No doubt, your Representative is already for the appropriation; yet, an expression from you assuring him of your appreciation of his interest in education and assuring him the passage of the Appropriation Bill is vital to the cause of education in Kentucky, will have a tremendous moral effect, and your representative will appreciate the letter. I have learned that the Representatives like to have echoes from their home people. They like to feel that they have friends at home who endorse their legislative acts. You know how these things are. Will you write the letter today?

Of course, they need not know that I have written you relative to this matter, . . . and I would not write you, if I did not feel that your heart is in the cause and that you are deeply interested in making the Western Normal the great institution it is destined to be.<sup>33</sup>

Cherry concluded by saying that he didn't expect any trouble in the House, but simply didn't want to take any risk. He was destined for disappointment, however. The General Assembly approved legislation providing \$20,000 annually for two years, quite a bit less than Western needed; then Governor Augustus Willson, a Republican, vetoed the measure. In spite of further efforts by Cherry and the Board of Regents, the General Assembly adjourned with Western still in debt.

On February 4, 1911, the Western Normal School moved into the new home although it was still not paid for. In his report to the Superintendent in 1911, Cherry said the school was enjoying unprecedented success, but added that "The limited financial condition of the institution has, of course, greatly handicapped us in the development of the new site and in adding progressive courses of study."<sup>34</sup> In their report in December, 1911, the Board of Regents made the same point, saying:

We have necessarily experienced many difficulties in the administration of the institution on account of its having been necessary to purchase a new site and start the development of a new educational plant from the beginning. Funds have been inadequate to meet the requirements of the undertaking, and this has made our task a difficult one. We have

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<sup>33</sup>Letter to former students, copy in Cherry's scrapbook, 1910, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>34</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, 1909-11, Vol. 2, p. 121.

tried to do the thing that is in the interest of the Commonwealth, and we believe, after you have investigated the work of the institution and the location and development of the new plant, that you will be greatly pleased with the work we have done.<sup>35</sup>

When the state legislature convened in 1912, President Cherry and the Board launched a determined campaign to get Western out of debt and the contractors, who were pressing the school for payment, paid. This campaign was initiated by calling the entire school together in a mass rally which one observer described as an old-fashioned prayer meeting. Then a lengthy petition to the General Assembly was prepared, and county delegations wrote letters to their legislators asking them to support the measure providing the funds needed by Western. Finally a train was chartered from the Louisville and Nashville Railroad to transport the president, faculty and all students who could afford the \$2.35 fare to Frankfort to make a final appeal to the legislature. The General Assembly did increase Western's annual appropriation from \$50,000 to \$75,000, but did not make any further appropriation for capital outlay. In the light of this action, President Cherry and the Board of Regents then requested the General Assembly to authorize Western to borrow money by mortgaging its property so they could pay the school's debt. The legislature responded by passing a bill providing that the state would pay the interest on the money borrowed, but made no provision for the repayment of the capital. The Board of Regents then floated a

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<sup>35</sup>Report of the Board of Regents, December 19, 1911.

bond issue of \$100,000 to mature at the rate of \$5,000 on June 1 of each year, 1913 through 1922, and \$50,000 in 1923.<sup>36</sup> Since the legislature refused to pay more than the interest, Western was forced to meet these bond payments out of its annual maintenance appropriation.

The appropriations bill which provided Western with an additional \$25,000 annually carried with it an amendment aimed directly at President Cherry. The clause stated:

. . . it shall be illegal for any officer, trustee, or any person in any way connected with the Eastern Kentucky Normal School, the Western Kentucky Normal School or the State University of Lexington, Kentucky, to contract any obligation for or on behalf of said institution, when there is no money, or insufficient money, in their respective treasuries or has been no money appropriated for the purpose for which said contract or obligation was made, and, that any of the said persons who fail to comply with this law, shall be fined in each case not less than two hundred and fifty dollars, nor more than two thousand dollars, or confined not less than ten days in jail nor more than six months, or both so fined and imprisoned.<sup>37</sup>

This amendment was proposed by Representative W. H. Shanks of Lincoln County who said that it was not right for an institution to incur expenses and then call on the legislature to supply the money to meet them. Representative Green Keller of Nicholas County also made a speech criticizing Cherry and Western for "over-reaching themselves" by spending about \$70,000 over what was appropriated for them two

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<sup>36</sup>See Cornette, op. cit. pp. 146-148.

<sup>37</sup>Kentucky Statutes (Carroll, 1918), C. 113, Art. XVI, Section 4535b-2.

years earlier.<sup>38</sup> F. A. Lochry of McLean County said he disliked this amendment because he didn't believe the officials of our state educational institutions should be treated as criminals.<sup>39</sup>

Cherry and his school were soon back in the good graces of the legislature, however, as is indicated by the following statement from the report of a legislative committee appointed to look into the operations of the state institutions of higher learning in 1914:

We find nothing about this institution to criticize but a very great deal to commend; and we would suggest that if all the institutions of Kentucky receiving state aid would, with the same regard for economy and efficiency, discharge their respective duties to the commonwealth of Kentucky, at all times bearing in mind that the taxpayers of the state are to be given due consideration there would not be any occasion for a committee of this kind to investigate state institutions to which appropriations have been made or may hereafter be made.<sup>40</sup>

When State Inspector Sherman Goodpaster made his report to Governor James McCreary in April, 1914, he also praised Cherry and Western stating:

President Cherry is possessed with a remarkable executive ability, the results of which are evident in every department of the institution; and to him must be given credit of building up, in a comparatively short time, one of the greatest educational institutions of the South.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Courier-Journal, March 2, 1912.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Clipping from Henry County newspaper, 1915. Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>41</sup>Clipping, Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

In addition to all his activities in the educational field, Cherry was also active in other fields. The Glasgow Times said he was one of the most dynamic and forceful men in public life in the state. He served as chairman of a committee organized to promote Mammoth Cave as a national park; he participated in numerous programs advocating better roads for Kentucky; in 1913 he and J. D. McFerran started the Farmers' Chautauquas which soon attracted national attention; and he was active in local and state politics. As a result of all these activities, Cherry was well known and had built up a strong following among the citizens of Southern and Western Kentucky.

In 1914 Cherry began to entertain ideas of seeking the Democratic nomination for governor. Like all politicians he refused to announce his candidacy until it was clear that there was a rather strong movement in the state on his behalf. In correspondence with his friends, however, he did admit that there were letters and other communications expressing desires that he enter the race; and he wrote one friend saying, "I have gotten to believe that I could win it; at any rate, it looks good from any standpoint."<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile Cherry wrote to his friends all over the state asking them to feel out the sentiment in their communities in regard to his candidacy. In October, 1914, he wrote to W. L. Matthews of Livermore, saying:

Let me in a most confidential way ask you what you have heard along political lines. I would appreciate it if you would have some one feel the situation out a little in your section and let me hear from you. I trust you say something

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<sup>42</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to E. B. Weathers, October 2, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

to my friends that would cause them, at this time, to somewhat express themselves upon the matter of my entering the Gubernatorial race. There is quite a great deal of pressure brought to bear upon me to enter the race and many letters are coming to me, but I have not taken the matter seriously and I would like to know more about the situation in the field before coming to any conclusion. I trust you will do whatever you can to start a movement along the lines indicated as I would rather know something of the real strength of the movement before deciding either way. I have many friends in McClain [sic] county and other places who would be glad to do what they can. You know how to do it without a statement from me. Kindly keep this matter in the strictest confidence and destroy this letter after you have read it.<sup>43</sup>

In a similar vein he wrote Leslie H. Hurt in Graves County, saying:

I would appreciate it if you will, in a proper manner, stimulate interest in the matter I talked to you about. I do not know just what I shall do, but I am anxious to hear from some of my friends giving me some idea as to what they think the outlook would be in their communities, provided I should enter the race.<sup>44</sup>

Most of the reports Cherry received from friends were quite encouraging. Charles Brown wrote from Caneyville that Grayson County Democrats were highly in favor of Cherry's candidacy,<sup>45</sup> while J. T. McGee of Burkesville wrote that he thought Cherry had enough of his boys in the state to elect him to anything he might want.<sup>46</sup> This was a

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<sup>43</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to W. L. Matthews, October 1, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>44</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to Leslie H. Hurt, October 23, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>45</sup>Letter from Charles Brown to H. H. Cherry, August 12, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>46</sup>Letter from J. T. McGee to H. H. Cherry, April 4, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.



significant point because by 1914 over 10,000 students had attended the Western Kentucky Normal. Probably 7,000 to 8,000 of these had remained in Kentucky. In addition to these there were the hundreds of students of the private Southern Normal. In 1903 H. V. McChesney, State Superintendent, had commented that he encountered the graduates of Southern Normal in every county in the state and in both houses of the General Assembly.<sup>47</sup> This means there were around 12,000 persons in the state who had attended Cherry's schools, and letters to Cherry indicate that even some of those who had left the state offered to come back and campaign for him. One of those making such an offer was W. T. Ellison, nephew of Lewis McQuown, chairman of the Democratic State Central and Executive Committees during Governor Beckham's administration. These 12,000 persons do not represent many votes in a gubernatorial primary and not all of Cherry's former students would vote for him, of course, but many of these people were leaders and were quite influential in their communities and thus could provide a great deal of support for Cherry. In January, 1915, a "Cherry Club" was formed to organize former students in support of Cherry's candidacy, and this group was active in his behalf, soliciting votes and funds. J. E. Lane, superintendent of the Ballard County schools, wrote that all the people interested in education were for Cherry and said Woodrow Wilson's national administration would help Cherry's cause.<sup>48</sup> From McCracken County, M. V. Miller

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<sup>47</sup>As quoted in Daily Times, Journal, January 20, 1903.

<sup>48</sup>Letter from J. E. Lane to H. H. Cherry, October 2, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

observed, "All are agreed if Stanley will stay out you will win."<sup>49</sup> N. G. Martin, writing from Lyon County, also noted that Stanley was the man to beat, but said there were several anti-Stanley men in the county.<sup>50</sup> R. M. Stroud, superintendent of the McLean County Schools, said there was only one thing in Cherry's way and that was A. O. Stanley.<sup>51</sup> Cherry's friend E. B. Weathers wrote from Elkton that Stanley had strong support because of his close association with the Farmers Tobacco Association,<sup>52</sup> which had been fighting the tobacco trust. He also warned Cherry that he would have to make some allowance for statewide prohibition as an issue, saying many in Todd County would make their choice for governor on this one issue.<sup>53</sup> G. R. DeVasher wrote that some people around Mumfordsville were saying Cherry didn't have a chance because the politicians would "run it over him,"<sup>54</sup> but on the whole the reports Cherry received were encouraging.

The reports of the press were rather encouraging to Cherry's candidacy. Early in 1914 the editor of the Todd County Times wrote:

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<sup>49</sup>Letter from M. V. Miller to H. H. Cherry, October 19, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>50</sup>Letter from N. G. Martin to H. H. Cherry, February 9, 1915, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>51</sup>Letter from R. M. Stroud to H. H. Cherry, October 23, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>52</sup>Letter from E. B. Weathers to H. H. Cherry, October 7, 1914, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Letter from G. R. DeVasher to H. H. Cherry, January 28, 1915, Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

The mentioning of H. H. Cherry as a candidate for Governor would indicate that there is beginning to arise in this State a spirit hostile to the elevation of peanut politicians to high office, and a disposition to put at the head of affairs men who have accomplished something really worthwhile.<sup>55</sup>

In Louisville, an editorial writer for The Jeffersonian observed, "It is hoped that he will consent to make the race, for men of his type are needed in all of our public offices."<sup>56</sup> The Bowling Green Messenger endorsed Cherry, saying he was honest and incorruptible, and the Hartford Herald pledged its support to a man who "is not afraid to tell where he stands."<sup>57</sup> The Loitchfield Gazette endorsed Cherry and said in its judgment his chances were good. The Journal of Labor published in Louisville said Cherry would make a good candidate and would be a friend of labor.<sup>58</sup> The Hancock Clarion said Cherry, "is widely and favorably known all over the state as a man of principle and of action. He is a Kentuckian of Kentuckians, . . ."<sup>59</sup> while the Cloverport News reported strong sentiment in

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<sup>55</sup>As reprinted in the Bowling Green Daily News, Clipping in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>56</sup>The Jeffersonian (Louisville), April 4, 1915.

<sup>57</sup>Hartford Herald, December 25, 1914.

<sup>58</sup>Clipping in Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

Breckinridge County for Cherry, especially among the younger set of Democrats.<sup>60</sup> One of the state's editors wrote:

Words cannot praise too highly the merits of the distinguished Western Kentucky teacher, for from the length and breadth of old Kentucky those who know him best, are the most loyal in their fidelity.<sup>61</sup>

Not all of the papers were so enthusiastic about Cherry's candidacy, of course, but even those papers which did not openly endorse Cherry spoke of him with respect.

The Louisville-Times did not call any names, but it probably had Cherry in mind when it warned the Kentucky Education Association that it should not become involved in politics. The Times said many good and useful organizations had been ridden to death by the politicians, and KEA should not be a means of boosting the personal ambitions of any candidate. The paper went on to observe:

Kentucky has been machine ridden too long to assent to a new machine manipulated by and for the schoolman.

The schoolman who is not content to do his day's work, leaving political machinations to others, should get out. Good schools and politics don't mix. Kentucky's great need is good schools. Of politicians it has always had and, it is to be feared, will continue to have a "super-abundant superfluity."<sup>62</sup>

In view of the strong sentiment on his behalf, Cherry decided to make the race and in January, 1915, he formally announced his

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Clipping in Cherry's scrapbook, no name or date.

<sup>62</sup>Clipping in Cherry's scrapbook, no date.

candidacy. In his announcement he stated:

I shall make the race in the interest of a greater moral, intellectual and industrial Kentucky . . . under no circumstances will I be a candidate of any political faction.<sup>63</sup>

He went on to say:

The mission of democracy is to put right above wrong, freedom above slavery, education above bank accounts, ideals above bullets, justice above force, honest politics above depraved politics and public service above public jobs.<sup>64</sup>

His deep interest in the cause of education was evident as he stated:

The first duty of the state and its first necessity is to provide for training which will guarantee the intelligence of its citizens. . . . It will take full grown citizens to make a full grown democracy and it will take a full grown system of education, . . . to make full grown citizens. . . . I want to emphasize that the biggest social and economic question before the people of the Commonwealth today is the education of the children who live in the rural sections.<sup>65</sup>

Cherry also expressed his support for the county unit law,<sup>66</sup> woman suffrage, a non-partisan judiciary and revision of the state tax structure. He concluded this announcement by saying, "My interest in a great Kentucky has prompted me to enter this race," and he pointed out that he had no political ambitions beyond the governorship.<sup>67</sup> This latter was an assurance to incumbent U. S. Senators

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<sup>63</sup>Clipping in Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>This legislation provided that the citizens of each county in the state should determine whether alcoholic beverages would be sold in their county.

<sup>67</sup>Clipping, Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

Ollie James and J. C. W. Beckham that he would not be after their seats in Congress. In a letter to Cora Wilson Stewart on January 12, Cherry said it looked as though his platform had made a fine impression.<sup>68</sup>

In January, 1915, about the middle of the month, Cherry tendered his letter of resignation to the Western Board of Regents, explaining:

Having entered the race for the Democratic nomination for Governor, I feel that it is my duty to hand you herewith my resignation as President of the Western Kentucky State Normal School. I fully realize that I am leaving a noble position and one that offers great opportunities for service in the work of developing a great Kentucky. My entrance into the gubernatorial race has already become to me an experience that silently reveals to me my devotion to the institution over which I have presided during its entire life; to its ideals, its Board of Regents, its able and loyal faculty, and to the noble young men and women who have entered its doors seeking more life in order that they might have more life to transmit to the children of Kentucky when they teach in the schools of the State. It is needless for me to tell you that I leave the institution with a keen and sad regret, but with a hidden feeling that I may be able, if elected Governor, to render a larger service to my State than if I should remain in my present position. I do not feel that I am deserting the ideals that I have championed for many years, but that I am only shifting my labors to other fields. No other motive could have prompted me to take this step.<sup>69</sup>

To place Cherry's candidacy in proper perspective, it is necessary to take a brief look at the composition of the Democratic party in Kentucky. As has already been pointed out earlier, the Democratic party of the state following the Civil War was a coalition

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<sup>68</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to Cora Wilson Stewart, January 12, 1915.

<sup>69</sup>Letter from H. H. Cherry to Western Board of Regents, January 11, 1915. Copy in Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

of two somewhat incompatible elements, the Bourbons of the Bluegrass and Pennyroyal regions and the smaller farmers of the Outer Bluegrass and Western Kentucky. The infusion of Populism into the Democratic party by William Goebel and his followers in the 1890's and early 1900's had a highly disruptive effect on this already shaky alliance. By advocating cheaper freight rates, free textbooks and tax reforms to shift the burden from the small farmers to the corporations, all of which were appealing to the small farmers, the Goebel wing of the party alienated many of the Bourbons and business elements and the party was split in two.

At the time when Cherry decided to enter the Democratic primary in 1915, Kentucky was just embarking on two decades of what came to be known as "combine politics." The Goebel wing of the party, inherited by J. C. W. Beckham and his el segundo Percy Haly when Goebel was assassinated, continued to advocate policies that were distasteful to the business and Bourbon elements of the party. Beckham was able to win the governorship in 1903, but in 1907 anti-Beckham Democrats helped elect Augustus Willson, a Republican, governor. In 1911 the Beckham-Haly forces were able to regain the governorship with James B. McCreary as their candidate.

It was during McCreary's administration that forces really started to develop which resulted in the so-called combine politics. At this time Eastern capital began to enter the coal mining regions of Eastern Kentucky and as these wealthy interests began to take part in political affairs, the coal mining interests became a major factor in state politics. These interests gained almost complete

control of the dominant Republican party in Eastern Kentucky, and according to George Willis "it came to be the fashion for hundreds sometimes thousands, and whole towns to vote en masse as directed."<sup>70</sup> In statewide elections these interests supported the candidates of whichever party they felt would benefit them most.

It was also during McCreary's administration that prohibition became a major issue in the Democratic party. The Beckham-Haly wing which had led the battle for the county unit law now turned from the local option approach to advocacy of statewide prohibition, a position most alarming to the liquor industry, one of the state's largest businesses. The distillers and saloonkeepers were ready to join an alliance to thwart the efforts of this wing of the party.

A short time later there was talk by the reform elements of banning parimutuel betting at the racetracks. This struck at the very heart of another of the state's major business enterprises, horse breeding and horse racing. So these interests, coal, liquor and horse racing, joined forces to protect themselves from the higher taxes, prohibition and betting bans advocated by the reform element of the Democratic party. The coal interests could deliver large numbers of votes in Eastern Kentucky while the racing and liquor interests were powerful in the Bluegrass and urban areas. For several years this alliance of the Kentucky Jockey Club-National Association of Coal Operators-Kentucky Distillers and Wholesale Liquor Dealers Association had a tremendous amount of influence in state politics.

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<sup>70</sup>Willis, op. cit., p. 435.



The combine was not particularly interested in whether there was a Democrat or a Republican in the executive mansion as long as they had sufficient influence to control state policy. They always took steps to ensure that there were candidates running in the primaries of both parties who could be counted on to cooperate if elected. They did not try to control the entire slate of candidates, simply the top spot; but they did frequently control a majority of the candidates for the General Assembly also. The combine's principal means of accomplishing its goals was through its control of most of the boards and commissions of state government which controlled most of the patronage.<sup>71</sup> Under state law these commissions and boards, such as the State Highway Commission and the State Board of Valuation and Assessment, were required to be bi-partisan. The combine was most successful in getting people appointed to these agencies who would do their bidding. If the governor were a Republican, then the Republican members came to the fore. But regardless, the combine had members belonging to both parties on the agencies. By controlling these agencies and the vast amounts of patronage at their disposal, the combine was able to exert a tremendous amount of influence over public policy, not only in those areas that were of immediate concern to them, but in other areas as well. When he was challenging the combine forces in the gubernatorial primary of 1923, Alben Barkley charged, "You can't get a school bill through the legislature without

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<sup>71</sup>Governor Ruby Laffoon was reputed to have boasted that he could, with patronage, buy enough votes in the legislature to pass any measure he desired.

going to the racetrack or coal lobby."<sup>72</sup>

Complicating this already complex political picture even further was the fact that this was not solely an issue-oriented politics. It is true that issues such as taxes, prohibition and parimutuel betting played an important role, but this was also a job-oriented politics. As a result, the alignments from one election to the next were highly fluid. It was a case of the "outs" combining to assault the "ins" or probably more accurately the "haves" in terms of jobs, contracts and favors being challenged by the "have nots." This frequently resulted in some prominent Democrat who had been with the "in" crowd but now discovered himself left out switching to the other camp and joining in the attacks on his former allies in the hopes of recouping his political fortunes.

In announcing his candidacy, Cherry stated that he would not be the candidate of any faction. When his name was first being mentioned for the nomination, however, it was rumored that he would have the backing of the organization of former governor Beckham. In January, 1915, Cherry had a lengthy meeting with Governor McCreary, a member of the Beckham faction, in Frankfort, but there was no indication at this time that the Beckham forces were ready to endorse Cherry. Both Beckham and Senator Ollie James were interested in a candidate who would not later seek their U. S. Senate seats, and since Cherry had expressed no aspirations beyond the governorship, he was accepted on this point. However, in announcing his candidacy, Cherry, largely

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<sup>72</sup>George W. Robinson, "The Making of a Kentucky Senator: Alben Barkley and the Gubernatorial Campaign of 1923," Filson Club History Quarterly, Vol. 40, (April, 1966), p. 128.

on the advice of his principal managers, W. J. Gooch of Franklin, Speaker of the House in the 1908 General Assembly, and Henry B. Hines, State Inspector under Governor Beckham, endorsed the county unit law. The Beckham-Haly forces now abandoned their previous stand in favor of this law and came out for statewide prohibition. This eliminated Cherry as their candidate and their support for the nomination went to H. V. McChesney, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the only Democratic candidate advocating statewide prohibition.<sup>73</sup>

In spite of the fact that the administration forces were backing someone else and this left him without a really effective organization, Cherry proceeded with his plans and in a speech launching his campaign at Mayfield on April 3, he told his audience:

We have already had too much bitter politics in Kentucky and not enough sincerity, business and statesmanship. Political campaigns are too frequently slaughter houses, where the needs of the populace are butchered in the interest of votes, offices and graft.<sup>74</sup>

Cherry soon found himself in a most difficult position in his campaign. To run a successful political campaign, a candidate must have substantial financial backing and the support of an effective organization. These important elements were lacking in Cherry's 1915 campaign. Most of his support was concentrated in Southern and Western Kentucky which was staunchly "dry" territory, and although he had always supported prohibition, Cherry was now being pictured by

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<sup>73</sup>Account based on clippings from various newspapers found in Cherry's scrapbook for 1915, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>74</sup>Clipping, Vertical File, Cherry folder, Kentucky Building Library.

the statewide prohibition forces as a pro-liquor man because of his endorsement of the county unit law. This would cost him votes and would place him in a position he did not care to occupy. Besides this problem, A. O. Stanley, a United States Representative from Kentucky, had entered the race with a vigorous attack on the Beckham-Haly wing of the party and had also endorsed the county unit law. This meant there were four candidates splitting the anti-prohibition vote—Cherry, Stanley, E. J. McDermott of Louisville and Henry M. Bosworth. Furthermore, Stanley was from Henderson and this meant that he and Cherry would split the vote in Western Kentucky and probably give the nomination to H. V. McChesney. The liquor forces and many of the anti-Beckham elements were backing Stanley, and it appeared as though the primary would become a contest between Stanley and McChesney. In addition to these difficulties, Cherry lacked sufficient campaign funds but adamantly refused to accept any contributions from the "interests."<sup>75</sup>

With these factors uppermost in his mind, Cherry announced his withdrawal from the race on April 29. In a card to the voters he explained:

A confusion of politics making results uncertain, the attempt to force the State-wide prohibition issue into the campaign before the Democratic party has expressed a desire of purpose to abandon the county unit law, to which it is now pledged, thereby muddying the political waters

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<sup>75</sup>This material based on accounts found in clippings from various newspapers in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

and endangering constructive legislation and party unity, and limited financial means prompt me to withdraw from the Governor's race.<sup>76</sup>

In 1919 when he was again seeking the nomination, Cherry told a reporter that he withdrew in 1915 because of "fear that he would be forced into a false position regarding prohibition."<sup>77</sup>

Cherry's withdrawal was greeted with mixed feelings by the press. Several of the state's papers agreed with the Fulton News which said Cherry took the wrong position on the liquor question; otherwise he could have won.<sup>78</sup> The Smithland Enterprise said he should have come out for statewide prohibition, while the Stanford Journal reported there were some who thought there was not room on a whiskey platform for two, A. O. Stanley being the candidate of the "wets."<sup>79</sup> The Elkton Times felt that Cherry was "not the kind of man to be engaged in state politics in Kentucky."<sup>80</sup> He was too honest and uncompromising to get the support necessary to win. A prime example of Cherry's attitude was his letter to H. L. Stone, attorney for the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, returning a pass given to him by the line to use while touring the state speaking on behalf of education. He said he did not think it proper to use this pass now that he was a candidate for public office so he was returning it.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Copy in Cherry's scrapbook, 1915, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>77</sup>Courier-Journal, March 12, 1919.

<sup>78</sup>Fulton News, May 7, 1915.

<sup>79</sup>Stanford Journal, May 7, 1915.

<sup>80</sup>Elkton Times, May 7, 1915.

<sup>81</sup>Letter from Cherry to H. L. Stone, January 12, 1915, Copy in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

It is interesting to note that in the 1919 primary, a L & N pass involving James Black, one of the candidates, and a friend became a major issue. Harry Sommers wrote in the Elizabethtown News:

Dr. Cherry could have been elected Governor easier than any other candidate but he could not be nominated. This does not speak very well for the wisdom of the party.<sup>82</sup>

In announcing his withdrawal, Cherry did not endorse any of the remaining candidates, and this led to widespread speculation as to who would get most of his support. - A Richmond Kentucky newspaper said Cherry withdrew in Stanley's interest, and the appearance of Henry B. Hines and W. J. Cooch, Cherry's managers and advisors, on the platform with Stanley when he launched his campaign a few days after Cherry's withdrawal led many to speculate that Stanley had indeed received Cherry's support. This was probably a valid assumption. The tone of Cherry's withdrawal note would seem to indicate that he disliked the way he had been treated by the Beckham-Haly-McCheesney faction, and he disagreed with their stand on the liquor issue. Moreover most of Cherry's strength was in Southern and Western Kentucky where Stanley was also popular, and undoubtedly when Cherry withdrew many voters who had been for him switched their allegiance to Stanley.

That Cherry had joined the Stanley ranks is further indicated by the fact that when the Democratic convention was held in August, 1915, with the Stanley forces in control, Cherry was elected permanent chairman. With Cherry presiding, the Stanley wing launched success-

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<sup>82</sup>Elizabethtown News, no date.

ful efforts to replace the Beckham-Haly men who were in key party positions. They selected W. M. Maldeman to replace Urey Woodson as national committeeman,<sup>83</sup> S. W. Hager, Stanley's campaign manager, to replace Rufus Van Sant as chairman of the State Central and Executive Committees, and Thomas Rhea and W. B. White were replaced by George B. Martin and James Edwards as members of the State Central Committee. When Beckham, who was absent at the time his men were replaced, moved to reconsider this action, Cherry as permanent chairman ruled him out of order.<sup>84</sup> The Stanley forces had things pretty much their way in the convention which also adopted a platform endorsing the county unit law.

At the time Cherry tendered his resignation to the Board of Regents, Barksdale Hamlett, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was mentioned as a possible successor. But during the time Cherry was in the campaign, faculty members assumed his duties, and the Board of Regents made little effort to find a successor. After his withdrawal from the primary at the end of April, a faculty committee wrote the Board requesting that they reappoint Cherry as president. When the Board met, he was reappointed unanimously at a salary of \$4,200, an increase of \$200 over what he was previously getting. Anticipation of this action led the Frankfort Courier to note that President Cherry would resume the duties his "resignation of which had a good sized cord attached to both ends when it was tendered."<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>W. M. Maldeman who was selected to replace Woodson eventually resigned when Woodson contested his seat on the National Committee.

<sup>84</sup>Louisville Herald, September 1, 1915.

<sup>85</sup>Frankfort Courier, April 30, 1915.

Upon resuming the duties of president, Cherry was in a rather strong position to make requests for assistance from a governor whom he and his friends had helped elect. Cherry's support had meant a lot of votes for Stanley in both the primary and the general election. W. J. Gooch, one of Cherry's campaign managers, served as chairman of the Speakers Bureau of the Democratic Campaign Committee during the general election campaign; and Henry B. Hines, Cherry's other campaign manager, was appointed chairman of the State Board of Control by Stanley. So some of Cherry's close friends were in positions of influence in the new administration. The state legislature of course is the body which makes the policy with respect to the state colleges, but in Kentucky the recommendations of the governor pack a lot of weight in the General Assembly, especially on budgetary matters.

In 1915 Western was still in debt and was forced to meet the annual \$5,000 bond payment out of the school's annual maintenance appropriation. Therefore, one of the first things Cherry set out to accomplish on his return to the presidency was to get the state to assume this indebtedness. Both Cherry and the Board of Regents had made repeated efforts in the past to convince state officials that the school received no appropriation from which these bonds could legally be paid, but thus far all efforts had failed. At its meeting in December, 1915, the Board of Regents appointed W. J. Gooch and John P. Haswell, members of the Board, to cooperate with C. U. McElroy, an influential Bowling Green attorney, in efforts to get the state to relieve the school of the debt. These men were to talk to the Attorney General M. M. Logan about the possibility of the state's



making the bond payments out of some other state fund and were to consider presenting a bill before the next session of the Legislature providing for reimbursing the school.<sup>86</sup> Their efforts achieved partial success when the 1916 session of the General Assembly enacted the legislation providing for the state to assume the remainder of Western's indebtedness. But it was not until 1922 that the school was finally reimbursed for the four \$5,000 bond payments it had already made.

Cherry's major concern continued to be finances. In his report for 1917, he noted:

The immediate needs of the Western Normal are many and most urgent, but the management does not, in view of the present condition of the fiscal affairs of the Commonwealth, hope to receive at this time, all of the aid the institution needs. It is earnestly hoped, however, that the General Assembly will be as liberal in its treatment of the institution as its work and the finances of the Commonwealth will justify.<sup>87</sup>

He said it was utterly impossible to successfully conduct the Normal on its present annual appropriation. Cherry was already looking ahead to the legislative session in 1918 when a measure would be introduced changing the basis of financial support for the state colleges from a flat appropriation to a millage tax basis. When this proposal was taken up in 1918, Cherry and John Haswell went to

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<sup>86</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, December 19, 1915.

<sup>87</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, 1915-17, Vol. 1, p. 530.

Frankfort and worked for its passage.<sup>88</sup> The adoption of this measure resulted in substantial increases for current expenditures for the school.<sup>89</sup> The bill which was introduced also included a clause providing:

The tax herein provided . . . shall be used by the University of Kentucky and the Normal Schools for their maintenance and support, and when sufficient sums shall have accumulated in the treasuries thereof, it may be used for the erection of buildings and the purchase of land and equipment.<sup>90</sup>

The provision in this clause that surplus money might be used for capital outlay was a boon to Western. Although Cherry had from the beginning kept current expenses as low as possible and used any surpluses accumulated for buildings and improvements, this new legislation resulted in the expenditure of about twice the amount actually provided by the legislature for capital outlay. This made it possible for Western to expand and improve its physical plant to meet growing enrollments much more rapidly than would have been possible had it relied solely upon the legislative appropriations for this purpose.

The United States involvement in World War I brought an abrupt halt to Western's rapid growth, and attendance dropped sharply as male students entered the military. The War also brought a new role for President Cherry. He was appointed as a member of the Kentucky Council of Defense and was selected as chairman of the Council's Committee on Publicity and the Speakers' Bureau.<sup>91</sup> In this role, he tour-

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<sup>88</sup>See Minutes of the Board of Regents, February 22, 1918.

<sup>89</sup>See Appendix E for receipts by Western during Cherry's presidency.

<sup>90</sup>Kentucky Statutes (Carroll, 1918), c. 102, Art. I, Section 4019.

ed the state, and under his direction, over three thousand different patriotic meetings and rallies were held throughout the commonwealth.

The year 1919 was a gubernatorial election year in Kentucky and Cherry decided to seek the nomination again. In December, 1918, he issued a statement to the voters of the state announcing his intention to run and outlining his platform. He came out in favor of improvements in education and agriculture, woman suffrage, a non-partisan judiciary, labor reform legislation, and charitable and penal institutions free of politics. On the prohibition issue which had caused his withdrawal in 1915, he stated:

I believe in local, State and National prohibition: in temperance, in law and order, and in the rigid enforcement of the law. I have never cast a ballot for the open saloon. A saloonless Kentucky would in my opinion promote in a big way social and economic efficiency. I shall vote and work for the adoption of the Statewide prohibition amendment submitted by the General Assembly of Kentucky and which is now pending before the people. If elected Governor I shall use every proper influence within my power to make temperance effective through the enactment and enforcement of law.<sup>91</sup>

Prohibition was no longer the issue it had been in 1915, however, as all the Democratic candidates took a stand similar to that expressed here by Cherry. Cherry also urged a "revitalization" of election day with the voters taking a greater interest and going to the polls in larger numbers. He said that with the people taking a greater interest in public affairs, candidates would not be forced to campaign so extensively and would, therefore, not need to spend such

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<sup>91</sup>Courier-Journal, December 21, 1918.

large sums of money. He warned, "One of the perils of democracy comes from political campaign funds frequently secured from questionable sources."<sup>92</sup> Cherry's interest in these matters can be attributed partially to the fact that many of his supporters were people who generally did not become too excited over political campaigns, and one of his major problems in the 1915 campaign had been a lack of sufficient campaign funds.

On December 28, Warren County Democrats held a mass meeting at which they enthusiastically endorsed Cherry's candidacy, adopting a resolution stating in part:

Every forward-looking movement for the credit of the State and welfare of the people has always had in him an earnest and effective champion. Every moral issue which has arisen has always found him on the right side. Every progressive measure which has been proposed, whether for governmental efficiency, educational expansion, agricultural betterment, or purity in politics, has always received his unflagging support.<sup>93</sup>

The resolution went on to add:

Personally honest, politically incorruptible, trained in the difficult work of intelligent and effective leadership, he is eminently qualified to fill the office of Governor, with credit alike to himself and to the Commonwealth.<sup>94</sup>

Early in 1919, Cherry's bid for the nomination was progressing smoothly. His short run for the nomination in 1915 had not hurt him since he had withdrawn before he suffered from misrepresentation by

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid.

<sup>93</sup>Courier-Journal, January 3, 1919.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

the prohibition forces, and during the time he was in the race and later as head of the Speakers' Bureau during the war, he had made numerous political contacts and had gained public exposure which were helpful now. Also former governor and now United States Senator, A. O. Stanley, had expressed his approval of Cherry as the Democratic party's standard bearer, and the educator apparently had the backing of most of the forces which had elected Stanley governor in 1915 and Senator in 1918. In fact things were looking so promising for Cherry that one newsman felt that if the Beckham-Haly faction of the party weren't careful he was going to walk away with the nomination with virtually no contest.

In February the Beckham-Haly forces held a closed-door session at the Old Inn Hotel in Louisville to discuss possible candidates, but no decision was reached at that time. Rumors were that Percy Haly would like to run but was afraid his Catholic religion would be too much of a handicap. Meanwhile Cherry was busy conferring with leaders in state politics, "feeling them out." He planned to open campaign headquarters in the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville on April 1, and to launch his campaign with a speech at Benton on April 7. Seldon R. Glenn of Eddyville, a leading figure in state politics and Secretary of the Democratic State Central and Executive Committee, resigned his position in March to become Cherry's campaign manager.<sup>95</sup>

It appeared that Cherry's principal opponents would be Judge John Carroll of New Castle, Chief Justice of the State Court of

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<sup>95</sup>Based on articles in the Courier-Journal, January - April, 1919, and clippings from other papers in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

Appeals, and Governor James Black of Barbourville who had succeeded to the office when Governor Stanley had to resign to take his seat in the United States Senate. Stanley's election to the Senate had resulted in a rather interesting political situation. In the Democratic primary in 1915, Black had run on a slate of candidates headed by H. V. McChesney and supported by the Beckham-Haly wing of the party. Most of the candidates slated with Stanley had won their races, but Black won the nomination for lieutenant governor and was elected along with the other Democrats in the general election. Because of this situation, even though he was elected to the Senate in 1918, Stanley planned to remain in office as governor until his term ended in 1919 to keep Black, who was associated with the opposing faction, out of the governorship. But President Wilson called a special session of Congress and Stanley had to go to Washington earlier than planned to take his seat and Black became governor. The anti-Stanley forces immediately pressed Black to replace several Stanley appointees with anti-Stanley men. When he refused to do so, Black incurred the displeasure of that wing of the party but gained the support of some of the Stanley office-holders. As a result of these factors, the political situation in 1919 was rather confused. No single candidate had the undivided support of either wing of the party. As already noted, Cherry had the support of the Stanley forces and several of his allies including Seldon Glenn, Henry B. Hines, chairman of the State Board of Control, and Tom Pannell of Greenville, State Fire Marshal. Judge Carroll's campaign, however, was being managed by M. M. Logan who had been a close friend of Stanley, and Governor Black also had the support of sev-

eral former Stanley supporters. Several of these latter people probably felt it was a case of supporting Black or losing their jobs. The fact that Black was in the governorship gave him control over a great deal of patronage which was most valuable in the campaign. The Beckham-Haly forces had not at this point made their position in the campaign clear.<sup>96</sup>

In spite of the fact that he did not have the undivided support of the Stanley organization, Cherry appeared to have a good chance of getting the nomination. Then in late March, his campaign began to encounter problems. With World War I over and the soldiers returning, the name of H. H. Denhardt, a war hero from Bowling Green, was being mentioned as a candidate for governor. If he entered the race this would be a tremendous blow to Cherry's hopes since it was felt that two candidates from the same town would destroy one another. Seldon Glenn went to Bowling Green to talk with Denhardt, but had no success in sidetracking his candidacy. April 1 came and Cherry headquarters did not open in the Seelbach as planned, supposedly because of the crowded conditions resulting from the Convention of the Daughters of the Confederacy being held there. Undoubtedly Denhardt's entrance into the picture had a great deal to do with this change of plans. It was rumored that if Denhardt entered the race, he would have the support of Percy Haly, close associate of former governor and present United States Senator J. C. W. Beckham. Beckham, himself, was remaining unusually silent in this campaign.

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<sup>96</sup>Based on articles in the Courier-Journal, issues for January to April, 1919.

On April 3, Cherry and his supporters suffered another staggering blow when Tom Rhea of Russellville, who it had been assumed would run for State Auditor, announced as a candidate for governor. A reporter for the Courier-Journal hurried to the Seelbach Hotel to see what the reaction of Cherry's supporters was. He wrote that when he entered Seldon Glenn's room, he was stretched out on his bed. According to the reporter, Glenn assured him his prone position had nothing to do with Rhea's announcement. Glenn went on to note that if a few more persons announced for the nomination, "Cherry could win on the strength of the school teachers' vote."<sup>97</sup>

Rhea's announcement as a candidate further complicated an already muddled state of political affairs and led to all sorts of speculation on the part of political observers. Several people predicted that Rhea would have the support of the Beckham-Haly faction because of his close personal friendship with both men. Others speculated that Rhea had entered the race after a conference of Stanley men had decided that with Denhardt in the race, Cherry could not win and decided to support another candidate. These people were hopeful that Rhea's announcement would sidetrack Denhardt's candidacy. Rhea had ties with both wings of the Democratic party, having managed the successful campaigns of both Senator J. C. W. Beckham and Senator A. O. Stanley. It was reported that he had managed Stanley's campaign in 1918 at the suggestion of Seldon Glenn, who was now Cherry's

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<sup>97</sup>Courier-Journal, April 6, 1919.



campaign manager.<sup>98</sup>

The entrances of Denhardt and Rhea into the primary picture were devastating blows to Cherry's nomination hopes. Already suffering from poor health brought on by overwork and worry connected with the campaign, Cherry announced his withdrawal from the race on April 7. In a card to the voters he stated:

The outlook for my nomination is more than satisfactory, and it is the deepest regret of my life that circumstances over which I have no control force me to take this step.<sup>99</sup>

Cherry's withdrawal led to widespread speculation and rumor. Some people wondered if he had not been the victim of a trade. It was rumored that Cherry had been approached about making certain appointments if elected with the understanding that refusal to go along with these appointments would cost him the support of certain elements. When asked about these rumors by a reporter, Cherry declined to comment, saying he had made no commitments.<sup>100</sup> This sort of action was typical of the combine, however, and it is probable that Cherry was approached on such matters. Governor Black's forces charged later in the campaign that M. M. Logan, manager of Judge Carroll's campaign, had promised that Stanley men would be taken care of if his candidate were elected. Cherry was not the type to make such commitments even if it meant the loss of support.

No doubt Cherry's poor health was a major factor because his

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<sup>98</sup>Based on accounts in the Courier-Journal, April 4, 1919.

<sup>99</sup>Courier-Journal, April 8, 1919.

<sup>100</sup>Courier-Journal, April 9, 1919.

physician had warned him of physical exertion, and his physical condition had been a source of concern for his close associates for some time. But many felt that had the Stanley forces stood firmly behind him, Cherry would have continued his pursuit of the nomination in spite of this difficulty.<sup>101</sup> After withdrawing, Cherry left the state for several days to rest and regain his health. It was reported that with Cherry out of the race, the Stanley men would support Tom Rhea; and Seldon Glenn, Cherry's manager, did say that with Cherry out, he would rather see Rhea the candidate than anyone else.<sup>102</sup> But Rhea also had close ties to the Beckham forces at this time and this caused some of those who had supported Cherry to be somewhat wary of him. They shifted their support to Judge Carroll when Cherry withdrew.

When he entered the primary, Rhea expected the support of the Stanley forces supporting Cherry who were becoming alarmed over the prospects of Denhardt's entry into the race and also the support of the Beckham-Haly forces because of his close friendship with them. As things developed, Percy Haly, who was miffed because Beckham and Rhea had not given him more encouragement to run himself, continued to support Denhardt and attacked Rhea as being the candidate of the Stanley forces; and on the other hand, Rhea did not have the undivided support of the Stanley people; so he decided to withdraw from the race. Some weeks later Denhardt also announced he was pulling out, and the primary became a contest between Judge Carroll

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<sup>101</sup>Courier-Journal, April 8, 1919.

<sup>102</sup>Courier-Journal, April 4, 1919.

and Governor Black, with Carroll getting most of the support of the Stanley faction and Black the support of the Beckham-Haly forces.<sup>103</sup> Black won the nomination, but in the general election was a victim of the combine, being defeated by the Republican, Edwin P. Morrow.

Cherry remained active in state politics, but his race in 1919 was his last attempt to be elected to public office. After undergoing two operations and regaining his health, he returned once again to his duties as president of Western, and it is probable that he was even more effective in his efforts on behalf of the school than he had been before. In his two bids for the gubernatorial nomination he had made numerous friends and political contacts which undoubtedly proved useful in getting legislation approved.

One of the first tasks undertaken by Cherry on returning to his duties as president was that of getting the General Assembly to enact legislation expanding the normal schools to four-year teachers' colleges. Great educational changes had transpired in the state during the fifteen years since the Normals had first opened their doors. In 1906, when the schools were founded, teachers were not encouraged to get professional training; they could acquire certificates to teach in high school without having advanced beyond the eighth grade themselves. This was the situation the Normals hoped to correct by providing both academic and professional training for prospective teachers. During the early years much of their training was, of

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<sup>103</sup>Based on accounts in the Courier-Journal, April, 1919.

necessity, eighth grade and high school level because a large percentage of their students had not advanced beyond this stage.<sup>104</sup> Consider the following figures for example. In 1907, out of the 400 students attending Western only 80 had some training beyond the common school level and only eight were high school graduates. This situation improved gradually so that by 1916 there were sixteen high school graduates among the student body; in 1917 there were twenty-one; in 1918 the number was up to twenty-three, and by 1919 there were over 200 high school graduates among the student body.<sup>105</sup>

When the Normals were founded there were very few public high schools in the state, but by 1919 every county in the state had at least one public high school, and by 1922 there were 223 such schools in operation.<sup>106</sup> As long as the number of high schools in the state had been insufficient to train the teachers, the Normals had to offer high school work. But by 1922 the state's system of public high schools had expanded sufficiently to do most of the work the Normals had been forced to do earlier, and it was possible for the Normals to begin gradually to eliminate high school work and in its place to expand to four years of college work.

With this objective in mind, the Boards of Regents of Western and Eastern met jointly on November 19, 1921, to hear arguments, for and against, becoming four-year teachers' colleges. After

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<sup>104</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 161.

<sup>105</sup>Statistics taken from Normal Heights, June, 1919, and Regents Report, 1916.

<sup>106</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, Superintendent's Report, 1929, p. 88.

discussing the matter and deciding in favor of the change, George Colvin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, H. H. Cherry and T. J. Coates, president of Eastern, were appointed to draft a bill to be proposed at the next session of the General Assembly making the Normals into four-year colleges.<sup>107</sup> When the legislature met, this legislation was passed with little trouble, being approved 65 to 1 in the House and 33 to 0 in the Senate.<sup>108</sup>

The biggest need of the school was still money. As it was starting its work as a four-year college in 1923, Professor A. L. Crabb wrote, "It stands sorely in need of practically every asset that money can purchase for an institution of learning."<sup>109</sup> Inadequate finances led to over-crowded classrooms and buildings, underpaid and over-worked faculty and a limited curriculum. J. H. Allen, editor of the Cynthiana Democrat, wrote in 1923 after a visit to the Western campus, "The state has provided funds and equipment for 1,000 students. There are now in daily attendance about 1,800."<sup>110</sup> He said it was folly for the last session of the General Assembly to provide for two new normal schools when the two already in existence were "woefully provided with funds necessary to carry on the work cut out for them."<sup>111</sup> In his article, Professor Crabb optimistically

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<sup>107</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, November 19, 1921.

<sup>108</sup>Kentucky General Assembly, House Journal (1922), p. 2410; Senate Journal (1922), p. 2243.

<sup>109</sup>Teachers College Heights, August 23, 1923, p. 16.

<sup>110</sup>As reprinted in Teachers College Heights, August, 1923, p. 15.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid.

predicted, "Most of these shortages will be taken care of by the State when it has become keenly conscious of the service which a trained teacher may give in the development of citizenship."<sup>112</sup>

Allen was less optimistic as he noted:

. . . at every session of the Kentucky Legislature, Dr. Cherry must go to Frankfort with his hat in his hand and his mouth in the dust like a common beggar, imploring the representatives of the people to make appropriations of the people's money for the benefit of the people's children.

The writer wishes the Legislature might go down to Bowling Green in a body and see at first hand what is being done. Then, he believes, there would be no question about sufficient funds and equipment.<sup>113</sup>

Cherry may not have been quite the beggar Allen pictured, but he did spend a lot of time pleading Western's case for larger appropriations before the legislature, and his effectiveness in this cause is attested to by the increased revenue received by the school. In 1924, after several members of the legislature had visited the campus, a special appropriation of \$200,000 in addition to the school's regular appropriation was approved. The Park City Daily News reported that after the visit, the legislature was willing to help all it could. Speaking of Cherry and his efforts, the reporter wrote:

He seems to have but one single purpose in life and that is to have the Normal School reach the very high altitude of his idealism in connection with it. He deserves as does the school, all the encouragement the state can possibly give.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup>Teachers College Heights, August, 1923, p. 16.

<sup>113</sup>Teachers College Heights, August, 1923, p. 15.

<sup>114</sup>Park City Daily News, March 3, 1924.

Also lending his support in the passage of this measure was Lieutenant Governor H. H. Denhardt, a Bowling Green resident and a personal friend of Cherry's. Governor William J. Fields, although having called for expanded facilities at the Normal Schools earlier, approved this bill somewhat reluctantly, explaining to Denhardt:

This item is very heavy in view of the present condition of the finances of the State, but notwithstanding that fact, I felt impelled to [ ] because of your interest in the institution and the great work that it is doing for the educational advancement of the State to approve the item.<sup>115</sup>

The 1924 legislature also approved an inheritance tax measure from which Western was to get 3/16 of the income. In both 1926 and 1928 Cherry was again successful in getting appropriations for the school, one of \$320,000 and the other for \$250,000.<sup>116</sup>

In 1927 Lieutenant Governor Denhardt was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor. In the course of his campaigning, he claimed that he had Cherry's support in the race. His opponents, very quick to reply, said that Dr. Cherry and his school should stay out of partisan politics. Cherry immediately issued a statement with the following explanation:

. . . permit me to say that I am thoroughly conscious that every dollar that goes into the development and maintenance of the Western Kentucky State Teachers College is derived from the taxes paid by the citizens of Kentucky. . . My stewardship then covers a wide range. I am responsible to all Kentucky citizens who pay taxes; . . . It is a large responsibility and one of which I am keenly conscious. The breadth and nature of this responsibility

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<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

<sup>116</sup>Cornette, op. cit., pp. 168-169.

demand of the Western Kentucky State Teachers College absolute freedom from sectarian, partisan and factional affiliations.

The Western Kentucky Teachers College has pursued but one policy regarding politics since its establishment in 1907. That policy is non-political, and one of equal consideration for all parties and all candidates who seek public office. This policy obtains today and shall continue to control the affairs of this institution as long as I remain its President.

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Educational institutions should be free from all forms of partisan politics and entangling alliances. They cannot accomplish the task assigned to them otherwise. The Western Kentucky Teachers College has never known a party creed, and while I remain its President it may be expected to pursue the same policies that have won for it the success it has achieved. This, I believe, is a clear statement of my conduct as it has been and will continue to be in the future.<sup>117</sup>

It was almost inevitable that a college president who was as politically active as Cherry would encounter such charges. What is more surprising is that Cherry was able to be so active politically and not incur the displeasure of more politicians. After Cherry's statement in 1927, the matter of his political activity was soon dropped.

This did not mark the end of Cherry's problems arising from politics however. In the Democratic primary in 1927, J. C. W. Beckham won his party's nomination, but in the general election the combine forces supported his opponent, Republican Flem Sampson. As a result Sampson was elected governor while all the other offices on the

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<sup>117</sup>Park City Daily News, February 3, 1927.



ballot were won by Democrats. This set the stage for some of the most vicious politics ever witnessed in the state as the Democratically controlled legislature set about enacting "ripper" legislation stripping Governor Sampson of many of his powers. Some of this political fighting spilled over into the education realm and Cherry and Western became involved.

Free textbooks in the public schools were a big issue at this time and legislation had been adopted which empowered the governor to appoint a State Textbook Commission to select books to be used in the schools. The Democratic Superintendent of Public Instruction, W. C. Bell, accused Governor Sampson of pressuring the Commission to adopt certain books and filed a suit in court challenging several of the adoptions made by the Commission. One of the textbooks toward which much of the criticism was directed was a history supplement containing several factual and grammatical errors. This supplement, allegedly written by Dr. Cherry and Dr. A. M. Stickles, head of the History Department at Western, was also criticized for several passages praising Governor Sampson and the Progress Commission he had created.<sup>118</sup>

Dr. Cherry quickly denied that he had written any part of the supplement, and Dr. Stickles gave this explanation of the matter: He said the Governor had asked the state colleges to prepare some materials that could be used as supplements to textbooks being used in the classes, and Dr. Cherry had felt that Western should contribute

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<sup>118</sup>Taken from various newspaper clippings in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

something. So different members of the History Department wrote some articles which in no way constituted a history of Kentucky, and Dr. Stickles sent these on to the Governor's office under the assumption that he would be given an opportunity to correct any errors before the material was published. Instead the material was printed as a history of Kentucky with Dr. Cherry and Dr. Stickles listed as its authors, and evidently some material praising the Governor and his administration was added as the original manuscript contained no such passages.<sup>119</sup> The Louisville Times came to the professors' defense, writing:

If the book alleged to have been written by Dr. H. M. Cherry . . . and Professor A. M. Stickles contains misstatements of fact and errors of grammar it would be interesting to know in what circumstances; under what pressure such a book, from such a source was produced.

Neither Dr. Cherry nor Professor Stickles, if left to his own designs, would be likely to produce such a book. Both of them, assuredly know how to write English and how to find facts.

Seemingly the "Kentucky Supplements" were written to celebrate the glory of Governor Sampson. Presumably they were written as a result of the influence a Governor has over institutions which must get their appropriations through the legislature, and must deal with the Governor, in sundry ways.<sup>120</sup>

The Times went on to say that apparently the laudation of the Governor and his Progress Commission were added by someone in the Governor's

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<sup>119</sup>Times-Journal (Bowling Green, Kentucky), June 19, 1929.

<sup>120</sup>The Louisville Times, June 8, 1929.

office because there was no laudation in the text when it left Bowling Green.<sup>121</sup>

The Park City Daily News joined the Times in its criticism, saying:

We concur with the Times in its condemnation of the dishonest practices at Frankfort that have been brought to light during the recent textbook investigation. The names of two such reputable citizens as President Cherry and Professor Stickles have been employed in an unworthy scheme serious enough to warrant our hearty condemnation. . . .<sup>122</sup>

In an editorial on the situation, the Courier-Journal had this to say:

Before the normal schools began their minstrelsy--when the Sampson saga was yet to be sung--there were rueful comments on the presence of leg-weary normal school representatives straining their arches about the legislative lobby in behalf of administration measures.

Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and bootlicking for business, social or political favors is common enough to be understood, if not charitably condoned. But slovenly idioms, betraying incapacity for precision of expression and ignorance of grammatical usage, cry out to heaven of Kentucky's forty-seventh place in educational rank by states.<sup>123</sup>

The suit filed by Superintendent Bell went before the Court of Appeals, and the Court held that four-fifths of the books selected by the State Textbook Commission were adopted illegally. Still the struggle between the Governor and Bell went on, as charges were

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid.

<sup>122</sup>Park City Daily News, June 19, 1929.

<sup>123</sup>Courier-Journal, June 18, 1929.

brought against the Governor for accepting gifts from book publishers. The Governor, in turn, tried to gain the support of the KSA by having W. L. Jayne of Morehead State Normal elected as president of the body, but the educators revolted against such interference by the Governor and Jayne was defeated in his bid. The court quickly exonerated Sampson on the charges of being bribed by the book publishers, but this episode had caused a lot of ill feelings.<sup>124</sup> The Kansas City Star commented that "it had not been supposed that anybody could be bribed with an arithmetic and a grammar, but politics is politics in Kentucky."<sup>125</sup> President Cherry, because of the vulnerable position of his school, had felt it best to comply with the Governor's wishes for some text supplements, and as a result found himself involved in a sticky political situation. Eventually the situation improved, but not before all involved had come in for some harsh criticism.

As a result of this episode the Board of Regents at a meeting the following year adopted this resolution:

. . . it is the opinion of the Board that President Cherry should not give a personal endorsement to any book, paper or article with a view of giving standing and disseminating it to the public.<sup>126</sup>

The episode involving Cherry's alleged authorship of the history supplement failed to reduce the respect Warren County citizens had

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<sup>124</sup>From Clippings in Cherry's scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>125</sup>As quoted in the Times-Journal (Bowling Green), June 19, 1929.

<sup>126</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, November 23, 1930.

for him. This is indicated by the fact that when Cherry invited the state legislators to visit the Western campus in 1930, Bowling Green and the community supported him wholeheartedly. One observer remarked that a few years ago when Cherry called for help, he got a small group of supporters--now he got an overwhelming response. The observer said the reason for the change was that Cherry had impressed the people with his unselfish motives. He also noted that the school had brought increased financial benefits and profits to the city.<sup>127</sup>

The Times-Journal wrote:

Our people are beginning more recently to appreciate the magnitude of the school on the Hill, and they are also realizing more fully the breadth and ability of the man at the head of this institution to whom more than any other is due the location in our city and the rapid development of this great Teachers College.

For years Dr. Cherry has carried much of this load on his own shoulders, and our citizens should realize even more fully than they have, the obligation they owe to him, and to render to him every aid and assistance possible in his efforts to bring into existence the dreams he still has in mind of making this school even greater in every way as the years come and go.<sup>128</sup>

In his message to the General Assembly in 1930 Governor Sampson told them:

To continue these institutions (State Teachers Colleges) upon the same high plane and increase their attendance, efficiency and usefulness to the State, we should continue our liberal financial support, and this I am quite sure will be the desire of the members of the General Assembly.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>Times-Journal (Bowling Green), March 17, 1930.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>History of Education in Kentucky, 1915-40, p. 76.

The legislators heeded the Governor's advice and when they visited Western in 1930, they had already approved an appropriation of \$210,000 for a new health building at the school, thus making possible the completion of another step in Cherry's plans.

In the election of 1931, Ruby Laffoon, a Democrat, was elected governor to succeed the Republican, Flen Sampson. Governor Laffoon's administration continued the liberal policies toward the state colleges, but was handicapped by the depression blanketing the nation which severely reduced the available revenue. Because of the decline in its receipts, Western was forced to forego further building programs until 1933 when federal funds became available, through the Public Works Administration. Western did, however, expand its program in another area at this time. In April, 1931, the Board of Regents authorized the school to undertake a program of graduate study. In sanctioning this program the Regents adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, Western Teachers College, through its development and growth, has from an impelling spirit and need been called to extend another hand of service; and whereas, an institution, like an individual, to grow normally must have self-expression and self-measurement in progress and must sharpen its own spirit therein or stagnate through suppression; and

Whereas, our institution, feeling that it will strengthen its position as a leader of trained thought, to hold both its own morals acutely to its best endeavor and to meet the urge of the present and future through the contracts of service now demanded in education; and

Whereas, a failure to meet the present opportunities and needs for its self-preservation in doing what it was created for, would be disastrous if she did not respond to this demand from the young citizenship of the Commonwealth

and extend its curriculum gradually to one year of graduate work, be it therefore

Resolved, that the Board of Regents of the Western Teachers College do hereby authorize and empower its President and faculty to formulate a course of study in advance of the Bachelor's degree, which will upon completion entitle the conferring of a Master's degree.<sup>130</sup>

The Regents defended this course of action, pointing out that there was a growing need on the part of superintendents and principals for master's training. They said Western had entered the field only after demands had become so earnest and numerous that they felt it was their professional duty to do so. Rather strong opposition to the state colleges entering the graduate field at this time was expressed. Several people felt that with state revenues being limited by the depression, this was the wrong time to start such a program. It was felt that this would be injurious to graduate programs already offered at the University of Kentucky as the new programs would compete for limited revenues. Several felt that what little money was available should be used to maintain and strengthen the already existing program. The University also was opposed because the state colleges would not only compete for revenue but for students as well. In spite of frequent suggestions that it drop the graduate program, Western persisted in its efforts. The school's attitude was expressed by Western's Regents at their meeting in October, 1933:

. . . the Board recognizes the value of the graduate work and . . . it is the opinion of the Board that under no consideration should

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<sup>130</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, April 16, 1931.

~~Journal, April 16, 1931.~~

this work be discontinued.<sup>131</sup>

So in spite of limited funds available, Western continued its graduate programs.

Since the limited revenues of the state had forced the suspension of building programs at Western, Cherry turned to the federal government for assistance. Applications were made for PWA funds for projects on the campus. Cherry employed the same tactics that had proved effective with the state legislature in his efforts to secure federal money. He enlisted the aid of Kentucky Congressman; he made phone calls; he wrote letters, and he and John B. Rodes and Rodes K. Myers, two influential Bowling Green lawyers, went to Washington to apply for funds. Included with Western's application for a loan for a classroom building were exhibits showing the territorial range of the student body, the need for a new classroom building, an architect's statement of the dangerous condition of the present classroom building and three affidavits attesting to the state of unemployment in the Bowling Green area.<sup>132</sup> During 1934 money for several minor PWA projects was secured, but efforts to get a large loan for the construction of a new classroom building were unsuccessful. Undaunted, Cherry persisted in his efforts and late in 1935, after numerous long-distance telephone calls and letters, the government approved the loan for a new classroom building. Shortly thereafter United States Representative Glover H. Cary of

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<sup>131</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, October 24, 1933.

<sup>132</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, June 25, 1935.



Owensboro and Senator M. M. Logan of Bowling Green visited the campus and left pledging their support for the PWA appropriation in Congress.<sup>131</sup>

On the state scene Governor Laffoon's administration was hard pressed for revenue to finance its programs. The governor proposed to raise additional revenues by levying a sales tax. This was a highly controversial issue which split the state's Democrats, with the wing headed by the governor and his Highway Commissioner, Tom Rhea, being opposed by a faction headed by J. Dan Talbott of Bardstown and A. B. "Happy" Chandler who was Lieutenant Governor under Laffoon. Governor Laffoon tried to get the sales tax approved in the regular session of the General Assembly in 1934 but was defeated by the anti-sales tax forces. The governor then called a special session of the legislature, worked out an agreement with the Republican minority by sharing patronage with them, and rammed the tax measure through..

President Cherry and Western took a great deal of interest in the sales tax proposal and lent their full support to the effort to get it passed. At their meeting on April 19, 1934, the Board of Regents went on record as approving the proposed 3% sales tax levy.<sup>132</sup> At an April 30th meeting, Cherry told the faculty that unless some legislation were enacted at a special session of the General Assembly, education in the state would be wrecked. He closed the meeting

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<sup>132</sup>Cornette, op. cit., p. 171.

<sup>133</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, April 19, 1934.

by asking everyone to be "a champion of education."<sup>136</sup> During the special session Cherry headed a delegation of Western students who went to Frankfort to urge the legislature to approve the sales tax measure. At a faculty meeting on June 18, Cherry urged the faculty to raise \$200 to take care of those students who were financially unable to bear the expense of such a trip.<sup>137</sup> Following the passage of the sales tax measure, Cherry told the faculty that the whole educational profession should work hard to justify its stand on the matter of raising necessary revenue in order to carry on the school system in Kentucky. He added that if some tax had not been raised, the whole system of schools of the state would have been wrecked.<sup>138</sup>

In another significant piece of action, the 1934 session of the General Assembly enacted legislation creating the Council on Public Higher Education. This Council, composed of the presidents of the University of Kentucky and the four state colleges, one member of the board of regents of each state college, three appointive members of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, two lay members of the State Board of Education, the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Kentucky and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was empowered to coordinate work and determine the curricular offerings of the five public institutions of higher learning for white people in Kentucky.<sup>139</sup> This Council would become

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<sup>136</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, April 30, 1934.

<sup>137</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, June 18, 1934.

<sup>138</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, September 19, 1934.

<sup>139</sup>Cornotte, op. cit., p. 186.

the scene of some heated disputes between the state university and the state colleges in the next several years. The 1934 session also changed the basis for financing the state colleges and the University from a millage tax basis back to a biennial appropriation.

In the Democratic gubernatorial primary of 1935, the sales tax enacted by the special session in 1934 became a major issue. Tom Rhea was the candidate of the Laffoon forces and his principal opponent was A. B. "Happy" Chandler who was supported by the Talbott-Beckham-Haly faction of the party. In the primary Rhea polled the most votes but fell short of the required majority and a run-off primary was necessitated. Chandler surprised many political observers by defeating Rhea in the run-off and then going on to defeat the Republican King Swope in the general election in spite of the fact that several disgruntled Democrats supported the Republican.<sup>139</sup>

In his 1935 campaign Chandler ran on a platform promising repeal of the sales tax and elimination of the state debt. The only way to accomplish this was by reducing state expenditures and increasing revenues from sources other than the sales tax. In line with this policy, the governor, in a meeting with the state college presidents at the governor's mansion on March 16, 1936, suggested that the student's fee be raised to a minimum of \$50 and that the schools reorganize graduate instruction so that more money would be available for undergraduate work.<sup>140</sup> This latter suggestion was aimed speci-

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<sup>139</sup>See Orval Baylor, J. Dan Talbott: Champion of Good Government (Louisville: Kentucky Printing Corporation, 1942), pp. 330-340.

<sup>140</sup>Minutes of the Council of Public Higher Education, March 24, 1936, p. 22.

fically at Western since it was the only state college offering graduate work at this time. Chandler said he felt that Western simply was not qualified at this time to provide sound graduate work and a degree from the school would not be worth anything.<sup>142</sup> President Cherry, who was rather closely associated with the Laffoon-Rhea anti-Chandler faction of the Democratic party, opposed these proposals quite vigorously.

The Minutes of the Council on Public Higher Education show that Cherry voted for increasing the student fee to \$25, but they also note that in the discussion of this matter before the voting, several of the presidents expressed their reluctance to raise the fees.<sup>142</sup> Cherry was one of those expressing his disfavor of this action because even though he voted for the increase, he later told his faculty:

I did my utmost to keep graduate work and to avoid raising the incidental fee from \$15 to \$25. No one knows how hard I fought to keep down the fee. I have spent almost half of my life in trying to help poor boys and girls. I believe that the raising of the fee will cut the attendance not less than 25%. I have held all my life and I still hold that every poor boy and girl has a right to an education and the raising of the fee is bound to keep many of them from attending college.<sup>143</sup>

Cherry also strongly opposed the efforts to force his school to discontinue its graduate program. At the Council meeting of

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<sup>142</sup>Interview with former governor, A. B. Chandler, August 17, 1967.

<sup>143</sup>Minutes of the Council on Public Higher Education, March 24, 1936, p. 23.

<sup>144</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, April 1, 1936.

March 24, 1936, he read a lengthy statement into the minutes in which he defended the graduate program, stating that Western "did not enter this field of more advanced professional service in a hurried or haphazard manner."<sup>144</sup> He said that the cost of graduate instruction was negligible,<sup>145</sup> and it would be a serious mistake to halt the program.<sup>146</sup> In spite of Cherry's efforts, the Council on Public Higher Education acceded to Governor Chandler's request and adopted a resolution stating:

. . . the Teachers Colleges of the state shall discontinue all instruction at the graduate level and that there be one state-supported graduate school, which shall be at the University of Kentucky. Second, that teacher training at the two year level be eliminated at the University of Kentucky and that the College of Education shall not offer courses in education to freshmen and sophomores; and Third that this resolution shall become effective September 1, 1936.<sup>147</sup>

When the vote was taken on this resolution, Cherry did not vote; but after all the other members voted for this proposal, Cherry directed the secretary that he be recorded as voting "aye."<sup>148</sup> At a subse-

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<sup>144</sup>Minutes of the Council on Public Higher Education, March 24, 1936, p. 28.

<sup>145</sup>The Governor's Advisory Council in its 1933 report on Western stated that graduate work at the school cost several times as much as the undergraduate work. See page 9.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>147</sup>Minutes, Council on Public Higher Education, March 24, 1936, p. 25.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

quent meeting, indicating he still had not given up on this matter, Cherry requested that his vote be recorded in the minutes as "aye, with the privilege of taking it up later."<sup>199</sup> Cherry told the Western faculty that he had tried hard to keep graduate work and that he was hopeful something might still be worked out enabling the school to continue its graduate program. Cherry died, however, before the school again undertook graduate work.

Cherry and Chandler also clashed on yet another matter. During Chandler's administration a bill reorganizing state governmental machinery was proposed. This measure was opposed by the Laffoon-Rhea faction of the party largely because it would greatly reduce the patronage available for dispensation by state officials. President Cherry also opposed the measure because it included provisions for centralized purchasing for state institutions and would substantially reduce the control of the college presidents over the financial operations of their schools. Cherry had always used his control over purchasing for the school as a sort of patronage for building up support for the institution, and he objected to losing this tool. After efforts to amend the bill to death were almost successful, the administration was able to enact the bill into law.

So, 1936 brought some setbacks for Cherry, but his spirit was not dimmed. He had adopted as his own the philosophy expressed by Elbert Hubbard in these lines:

A successful man is one who has tried, not  
cried, who has worked, not dodged; who has  
shouldered responsibility, not evaded it;

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<sup>199</sup>Minutes of the Council on Public Higher Education, November 24, 1936, p. 44.

who has gotten under the burden, not merely stood off, looking on, giving advice and philosophizing on the situation. The result of a man's work is not the measure of his success. To go down with the ship in storm and tempest is better than to paddle away to Paradise in an Orthodox canoe. To have worked is to have succeeded—we leave the results to time. Life is too short to gather the harvest—we can only sow.<sup>15D</sup>

In keeping with this attitude, Cherry's last official meeting with the Board of Regents on May 17, 1937, involved the employment of an architect to prepare plans for another new building on the campus. True to character he was still sowing, and the seeds he had sown would have a lasting effect on higher education in Kentucky.

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<sup>15D</sup>From a clipping in Cherry's personal scrapbook, Kentucky Building Library.

## CHAPTER VII

### H. H. Cherry and Higher Education in Kentucky

It would be impossible to determine precisely the influence of Henry Hardin Cherry upon educational development in Kentucky, but unquestionably his influence was extensive and far-reaching. Testimony to this effect is plentiful. On the occasion of Cherry's death in August, 1937, the Nashville Banner observed that his demise marked the "passage of one of the notable educational figures of the South," and Cordell Hull, United States Secretary of State who had once been a student in the Southern Normal School, wired, "He was outstanding in the South as citizen and educator and his service and influence will be correspondingly lasting and widespread in their beneficial effects."<sup>1</sup> The Courier-Journal felt that Cherry's death marked the end of an era in education, seeing him as the last link in the state with the McGuffey's Reader period. Ksen Johnson, newspaper publisher who would later be Governor of Kentucky, wrote in his Richmond Daily Register that no single individual contributed more to educational progress in the state than this beloved patriarch. In 1938 when past presidents of the Kentucky Education Association were polled as to whom they considered the five greatest educational leaders in Kentucky for the past century, Cherry received the most votes, outpolling such men as Robert J. Breckinridge, James K. Patterson, and R. N. Roark.<sup>2</sup> An article in the Kentucky School Journal noted:

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<sup>1</sup>As quoted in the Park City Daily News, August 6, 1937.

<sup>2</sup>Kentucky School Journal, May, 1938.



Henry Hardin Cherry for almost half a century has been one of Kentucky's greatest educational pioneers. His magnetic personality, his driving influence, his militant leadership have been felt throughout these years. No other man has arisen [sic] to greater heights in his profession.<sup>3</sup>

Cherry's great influence in educational matters resulted from several factors, but of primary importance were his leadership ability and his zeal. The editor of the Henderson Gleaner wrote, "Dr. Cherry knows how to lead. It is a pity every Kentucky county has not such a man as he."<sup>4</sup> As Charles Merriam notes in his work, Systematic Politics, "The precise nature of leadership is one of the most difficult problems in the domain of politics. . . ."<sup>5</sup> Leadership is extremely difficult to pin down and define specifically, but judged on the basis of the characteristics set forth by Merriam, Cherry demonstrated many qualities of leadership.

According to Merriam, the political leader has a high degree of social sensitivity, sensing what goes on around him in the field of political and social power. He is likely to feel the weather and know the tides that come and go in human affairs and to be able to measure the effect of special pleas directed toward representing or influencing these movements and potentialities.<sup>6</sup> H. H. Cherry certainly possessed this quality as was demonstrated by his understanding

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<sup>3</sup>Kentucky School Journal, September, 1937, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>From clipping in Cherry's scrapbook for 1912-14, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Merriam, Systematic Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1945), p. 108.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

and respect for the power of public opinion. Much of Cherry's time as a college president was spent in presenting his case to the public in efforts to gain widespread support for his educational ideas. For almost half a century, he was in the forefront of every major educational movement in the state.

Merriam says the leader is likely to possess a high degree of facility in personal contacts with a wide variety of persons, enabling him to meet them without effort and with conspicuous success in case after case. When the cause is lost, perhaps the personality of the leader may save the day. A bold, aggressive, or sympathetic, idealistic man may gather around him a following concerned not with alleged goals but with his own form of public activity; or perhaps seeing in him a reaching-out toward a goal to which they themselves would go if only the way were shown.<sup>7</sup> Cherry was equally at ease working with professional educators, governors, legislators or the people in the remote rural areas of the state. He went about his work with a missionary fervor, preaching educational improvement everywhere from the halls of the statehouse to the remote backwoods. One of his greatest contributions to these efforts was his ability to rally to active service in behalf of education, thousands who would otherwise have remained totally indifferent. Cherry's enthusiasm and zeal seemed to rub off onto others and to compel them to take up the cause for better schools. Such a rallying of public support was essential to educational progress in the state. Cherry inspired a strong sense of loyalty and respect within those among whom he worked. Herman L. Donovan, one of the first graduates of Cherry's state

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

normal and later president of two colleges himself, said, "We care not what others may think, but for us he ranks as one of the greatest Kentuckians of all time. He was a great personality engaged in a great work. He stirred out ambition."<sup>8</sup>

Not only is Merriam's leader adept at personal contacts, he also is likely to have great facility in group contacts, ability to know and reckon and deal with a considerable number of interest groups whose aims conflict but toward whom there must be a sympathetic attitude. The various races, the religions, the classes, the regions, the innumerable culture groups--these the skillful leader understands how to conciliate or to unite in victorious combinations, if all cannot be drawn in.<sup>9</sup> In Kentucky's system of public higher education the state colleges and the state university act as interest groups before the General Assembly and the governor; thus Cherry, as the president of one of these colleges, certainly had to develop facility in group contacts. That Cherry was able to get along with various groups quite well is indicated by the fact that he served as president of the same institution for thirty-one years. As A. C. Rothermel, president of the State Teachers College in Kutztown, Pennsylvania, wrote Cherry, "Only a comparatively few men can hold the confidence of the citizens of the community, the education authorities of the state, the students and the alumni to make it possible for them to render continued service in the same position for so long a period."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Teachers College Heights, November 16, 1937, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup>Merriam, op. cit., p. 100.

<sup>10</sup>Letter from A. C. Rothermel to Cherry in a collection of letters written to Cherry on his 25th anniversary at Western, Kentucky Building Library.

The leader must also possess the ability of dramatic expression. He may have the voice of the great orator, the pen of the author or the dramatic ability of the actor, but he must be able to make his point effectively.<sup>11</sup> Cherry was deadly serious in his work; yet he demonstrated a certain flamboyance and possessed a sense of showmanship. A close friend said that had Cherry been Wolfe at Quebec, he would have never climbed the hill under cover of darkness and with no photographers present.<sup>12</sup> In presenting his case to the public, the governor or the legislature, Cherry often used a dramatic touch which made his point more effectively.

Some capacity for invention, whether of formulas, policies, ideologies, strategy or plans which may satisfy the requirements of difficult situations is also essential to the leader.<sup>13</sup> Certainly Cherry would meet this qualification because he was, above all, an "idea" man. His waking hours were filled with the planning of projects to provide Kentucky's youth with better educational opportunities. He was always pushing ahead, exploring new ideas, and his fertile brain was filled with plans for improving and expanding his state's educational facilities. Cherry was an innovator, and when faced with a difficult situation, his facile brain went to work immediately to come up with a solution. In 1919 the discovery of oil near Bowling Green caused the price of room and board to rise until it was prohibitive for most of the Normal students. Realizing that this would mean a drop in enrollment unless Western could provide

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<sup>11</sup>Merriam, op. cit., p. 110.

<sup>12</sup>Teachers College Heights (December, 1934), p. 22.

<sup>13</sup>Merriam, op. cit., p. 110.

living quarters for more students, Cherry came up with the idea of building several small cheap, but sound cottages and selling or renting them to students. The result was a small village of seventy-six cottages which became known as Cherrytown. This was a rather unorthodox method of housing college students, but it helped to alleviate the immediate problem.

Finally Merriam says, the leader ordinarily possesses an unusually high degree of courage.<sup>14</sup> Once again Cherry unquestionably possessed his share of this trait. A newspaper admirer wrote:

Professor Cherry has but a few equals and no superiors in the state of Kentucky when it comes to real hard educational work. He is a bundle of energy, has the zeal of Paul and the courage of Caesar.<sup>15</sup>

On numerous occasions Cherry demonstrated his courage by following a bold course of action in the face of great odds. In 1911, he proceeded with plans for the construction of a new administration building even though he knew it would cost more than was available from the legislature's last appropriation and more than likely would bring him under criticism from that body. Cherry did not hesitate to challenge those who opposed his educational proposals, even governors. (Former Governor A. B. Chandler said Cherry possessed a sort of "arrogance" for governors.<sup>16</sup>) For the president of a state college to take such an attitude is either foolish or courageous, and Cherry certainly doesn't belong in the first category.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 110.

<sup>15</sup>From a clipping in Cherry's scrapbook for 1912-14, Kentucky Building Library.

<sup>16</sup>Interview with A. B. Chandler, Versailles, Kentucky, August 17, 1967.

Also contributing to Cherry's effectiveness were his enthusiasm and dedication. He was a great believer in hard work, and he possessed tremendous physical energy which enabled him to plan and carry out prodigious amounts of work. In driving force, unswerving purpose and hard-headed determination, no one in state educational circles ever quite compared. The fact that he was first and foremost a Kentuckian gave his work a singleness of purpose which also contributed to his effectiveness.

It was in the area of teacher training, of course, that Cherry exerted his greatest influence, and because of his contributions here he was oftentimes called the "father of teachers colleges in Kentucky." He, more than any other individual, helped to focus attention on the need for state normals, and he carried on a ten-year campaign to see this goal achieved. Academic personnel had to be convinced and the taxpayers made to believe that there was really something worthwhile in this matter of teacher preparation, and Cherry, coming onto the scene in the pioneer stage, played a major role in the development of such an appreciation for the worth of teacher training.

Cherry must unquestionably be considered as the father of the Western Kentucky State Normal School because as the Bowling Green

Times-Journal stated:

Dr. Cherry was truly the founder of our local teachers college for it was through his efforts that this college was located in our city and through his able and conscientious leadership, his ability and dynamic power that the college has developed and grown to the magnificent institution which has the distinction of being recognized in the past few years as the largest teachers college in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Bowling Green Times-Journal, August 2, 1937.

Emerson once said that an institution was but the lengthening shadow of one man. He could almost have been speaking of Western State Normal and H. H. Cherry, because Cherry's influence upon that institution is almost hard to imagine. Even today, thirty years after his death, Cherry's influence still can be seen in the institution and its operations.

Cherry ran the school much as a strict father would run his family. The students were the children of the school and it looked after them, concerning itself not only with their education, but with everything from their health to their morals. For example, at a faculty meeting of January 28, 1907, Dr. Fred Mutchler, a science teacher on the faculty, was appointed chairman of a committee to care for the sick students, especially those with measles.<sup>18</sup> Most of the faculty meeting for November 4, 1907, was spent discussing the effects of the use of tobacco upon the students;<sup>19</sup> while at another meeting faculty members expressed concern over the absence of Bibles among the students and agreed that this should be mentioned in chapel and the students should be encouraged to attend Sunday school.<sup>20</sup> Rules and regulations were determined largely by the president, and he controlled virtually every facet of the student's life while he was enrolled at Western. The Board of Regents sanctioned such control by giving the president and faculty disciplinary powers. They established the following guidelines:

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<sup>18</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, January 28, 1907.

<sup>19</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, November 4, 1907.

<sup>20</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, November 6, 1908.

The faculty be and is hereby invested with the power and authority, with the approval of the President of the school and college, to suspend or expel for any length of time any pupil for insubordination or immoral conduct; and they are further invested, with the approval of the president, with all usual, customary, necessary or proper disciplinary power for the successful and proper conduct of the institution and from time to time to establish such special rules and regulations as may be deemed best. The disciplinary order relating to any student shall be effective at once but he shall have the right to appeal to the Board of Regents.<sup>21</sup>

Cherry's attitude on the proper role of the school has persisted over the years and has influenced the whole atmosphere of the institution. Even though the school has been changed to a liberal arts university offering degrees in several fields other than education, the teachers college atmosphere<sup>22</sup> still persists, and in spite of the fact that the present enrollment is approaching 10,000 students, the "big, happy family" approach to running things is still evident on occasion. Because many of the students who entered the Western Normal came from poor, rural families and he feared social discrimination, Cherry prohibited the formation of social fraternities and sororities. Only in 1965 did Western formally sanction the organization of nationally affiliated social fraternities and sororities on the campus.

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<sup>21</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, November 3, 1922.

<sup>22</sup>The teachers colleges and former teachers colleges give the AAUP most of its headaches over matters of academic freedom and similar matters.



~~Western officials~~ In 1965 Western officials touched off quite a furor when they suspended four students for publication of an article in an off-campus magazine which was termed morally "objectionable." The administration was acting on the basis of the authority granted by the Board of Regents and in keeping with the concept that the school was responsible for the morals of the students as well as their academic life. As a result of their action in this case, Western officials were censured by the Kentucky Civil Liberties Union, the Kentucky Conference of University Professors, and the Louisville Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, a professional journalism society. On the other hand they were commended for their action by such groups as the Third District Parent-Teachers Association, the Murray State AAUP Chapter, the Second District PTA, the Third District Principals Association, and the Sons of the American Revolution in Kentucky. Finally, after rather emotional exchanges from both sides and with the case still pending in court, the students were readmitted. How Cherry would have handled such a situation is hard to say, but without a doubt the philosophy of the proper role of the school which was developed during his years in the presidency contributed to this clash.

Cherry's influence of course was by no means confined simply to Western. As the head of one of the nation's largest teachers colleges, he came into contact with thousands of students, and he possessed an ability to stir their ambitions and infuse their minds with a desire to improve their communities and their state. An article in the Kentucky School Journal stated, "Not only did Dr.

Cherry build a great college, but in the building of it, he helped to build great leaders who have touched the lives of multitudes."<sup>23</sup> Cherry took great pride in this fact. In his report to the State Superintendent for 1915-17, he wrote:

It is a matter of common comment that our students have become not only leaders in teaching children, but that they have learned the art of going far beyond the four walls of the school-room to help build up the communities in which they live and labor.<sup>24</sup>

Cherry was training teachers, but at the same time he was also building better citizens. He said the Normal was the state's chief agent for training teachers, but it was also expected to "create ideals and to send out men and women trained for leadership in the Commonwealth."<sup>25</sup>

Another of Cherry's contributions to educational advancement in the state was his role in the development of a professional spirit and organization among the commonwealth's teachers. A strong believer in effective organization, Cherry urged the state's teachers to join the Kentucky Education Association and to use the organization to promote educational policy. He told a group of teachers attending a KEA session, "No teacher can rise above his association and education has never gone higher than its teachers and their professional associations."<sup>26</sup> As far as his own faculty members were concerned, Cherry said it was "understood that the institution is always one

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<sup>23</sup>Kentucky School Journal, September, 1937, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup>Kentucky, Public Documents, 1915-17, p. 527.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>As quoted in the Hopkinsville New Era, April 21, 1927.

hundred per cent behind the K. E. A., and the Third District Teachers Association, and that no outside pressure is necessary to put this into effect."<sup>27</sup> Western's faculty often agreed during Cherry's presidency that the burzar should withhold from their checks dues to the KEA and TDEA. Both faculty and students were always urged to attend KEA sessions, and frequently special trains provided transportation to KEA conventions.<sup>28</sup> Cherry was a member of the KEA for forty-five years, and as an active leader in the organization helped to develop it into one of the most effective professional groups in the state. One writer stated in the Kentucky School Journal:

As a member of the Board of Directors of KEA for thirty years and as president twice, 1902 and 1926, Cherry's leadership was potent in molding the teachers of Kentucky into a militant professional organization that has made and is making educational history.<sup>29</sup>

Today the KEA is one of the most effective lobbying groups in the state, not only on matters of educational policy, but on others as well.

Other influences exerted by Cherry upon the state's educational system were more subtle and therefore harder to assess. He could hardly be held responsible, for example, for the regional approach to higher education in Kentucky since this was largely an outgrowth of the state's politics. On the other hand, Cherry's activities as the head of one of the regional colleges and his methods tended to

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<sup>27</sup>Minutes of the Faculty, October 2, 1933.

<sup>28</sup>At the present time Western's spring vacation is scheduled so as to coincide with the annual convention of the KEA and faculty members are encouraged to attend.

<sup>29</sup>Kentucky School Journal, September, 1937, p. 10.

accentuate this regionalism and the competition among the state institutions of higher learning. Cherry was just as devoted to the idea of improving education throughout the state as anyone, but in his mind the best means for accomplishing this was the Normal Schools, and his first concern was the Western Kentucky Normal. As a result of this approach, the presidents of the state normals and their respective allies and the president of the University of Kentucky and his supporters battled one another for students, funds and the passage of legislation favorable to their respective institutions. Occasionally, the schools might join forces and work for some mutual goal, but more often than not, what was in the interest of one was not in the interest of the others, at least not from their point of view. The ultimate result of this situation has been that Kentucky maintains what are in effect two separate systems of higher education--the University of Kentucky with its community college branches across the state and the regional state universities. Furthermore, each of the institutions has had a tendency to develop individually rather than as part of an overall system of higher education. Cherry was not, as noted, responsible for this system; but he was willing to work under such an arrangement, since as a result of his substantial influence in state politics, Western usually came out quite well in the competition. So, indirectly he contributed to the development of this regional-competitive system because his career illustrated clearly the relationship between the college president's political influence and the treatment his institution received at the hands of the state government.

Another pattern to which Cherry contributed and which has

carried over to the present is the emphasis by the state colleges on increasing enrollments and expanding physical facilities. Cherry's motivation in these directions was two-fold. He had a deep concern for poor boys and girls, and he felt that every boy and girl desiring a college education should have an opportunity to acquire it. Secondly, he realized that increases in enrollment at his school would mean increases in appropriations from the legislature and income from student fees. Today the state's public institutions of higher learning are still pressing the same objectives. They are, of course, in a position which makes it difficult for them to control enrollments since, as public institutions, they have little choice but to admit those who can meet entrance requirements which are in many cases extremely low. In most instances, however, these institutions encourage large enrollments because the more students they have the more money they can demand of the state legislature.

There is nothing wrong with this emphasis on enrollments if other aspects of the schools' development keep pace. In fact, in Cherry's case at least one of his motives was commendable, that of affording a college education to as many young men and women as possible. But in too many instances the schools fail to give adequate consideration to the effect of increased enrollments upon the quality of education being provided. The emphasis is usually on building a physical plant to handle the burgeoning enrollments rather than on reducing the number of hours taught by instructors, the number of pupils per class and the pupil-teacher ratio. In one of his reports to the Board of Regents, for example, Cherry told them:

. . . I make no concealment of the fact that out of a desire to economize and use as much of the annual appropriation as possible for equipping the school and for providing a fund to supplement the general appropriation to be used in the purchase of grounds and the erection of buildings we have overworked the teaching force of the institution and we have failed to provide a few needed teachers and have frequently permitted some of the classes to be overcrowded.<sup>30</sup>

Such practices have enabled the schools to accommodate more pupils and may have made a college education available to some who otherwise would not have been able to attend, but only at the cost of overburdening the instructional staff and lowering the quality of instruction in the classroom. Kentucky's state universities are presently expanding their physical facilities at a rapid pace to meet increasing enrollments, but instructors still teach twelve to eighteen hours and student-teacher ratios are high.

This emphasis by the public institutions of higher learning on numbers is manifested in other ways also. The schools engage in vigorous competition to build up their enrollments because this will mean larger appropriations from the General Assembly. On occasion this competition tends to get out of hand. The Council on Public Higher Education is responsible for coordinating policy involving the public institutions of higher education in the state. This Council devised a formula whereby a school's appropriation would be based on the number of fifteen-hour "student units" it had enrolled. Under this arrangement Eastern Kentucky State College placed three students in dormitory rooms designed to accommodate two and made

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<sup>30</sup>Minutes of the Board of Regents, July 22, 1909.

the minimum student load eighteen semester hours instead of the usual fifteen to sixteen. This meant, under the Council formula, that for each five students enrolled under these conditions, Eastern got credit for an additional "student unit" and thus enhanced its appropriation. Because of this maneuvering, Western in 1966 refused to submit ~~its~~ proposed budget to the Council on Public Higher Education, but chose rather to go directly to the governor and the General Assembly. This is a good illustration of the still present preoccupation with numbers. Cherry should not be blamed for this phenomenon, but he certainly demonstrated during his career the effective use of numbers in promoting his institution with the state legislature.

One of Cherry's most significant contributions to educational development was without a doubt wholly unintentional on his part. He would have undoubtedly denied that there was any connection between politics and education; yet his career illustrates most effectively this relationship. Much of his time as a college president was spent in what would have to be termed political activity, not necessarily partisan, but nonetheless political.

In Kentucky virtually all activity is more or less political, and education is certainly no exception. Many Kentuckians have taken note of this fact. Professor J. R. Alexander, member of the Western faculty who served on the State Textbook Commission during Governor Stanley's term, once observed:

The public schools of Kentucky have always been the politician's best asset. Popular education has been the theme of more fine speeches and the basis of more vote trading and unfulfilled promises than all the other public questions combined. There has not been a political platform written or a political speech delivered in Kentucky for the past thirty years that has failed

to emphasize the benefits, beauties and delights of an education. "Better school houses," "better paid teachers," "cheaper schoolbooks," and "better educational conditions generally" are all phrases in Kentucky's political literature, but with all that, Kentucky is not rated particularly high in educational matters. If one tenth of these fine promises had been kept, Kentucky school houses would be the finest and best equipped public buildings in the state, and the Kentucky teachers would be the best paid servants on earth.

The trouble has been that the politician has tried to play both ends of the proposition. He has taken great delight in emphasizing the value of an education, but at the same time tried to convince his constituents that the process of education is inexpensive, and that a crime has been committed against them if they are required to contribute anything directly to the support of the institutions from which they are to derive these splendid advantages.<sup>31</sup>

In much the same vein another Kentuckian wrote:

Had the schools not too often been used for the purpose of promoting personal ambitions and dispensing patronage instead of agencies to educate the children and youth of Kentucky, the story would have been different. Conniving, chicanery, logrolling, and horse-trading instead of statesmanship have been the methods used to obtain appropriations from the legislature.<sup>32</sup>

This does not mean, however, that education is necessarily a partisan political issue; that there is a Democratic educational policy and a Republican educational policy. In Kentucky, public education generally has not been the object of partisan debates. It is, never-

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<sup>31</sup>As quoted in the Courier-Journal, June 14, 1919.

<sup>32</sup>Virgil Burns, A Defense of Kentucky's Constitution (New York: Vantage Press, 1952), p. 36.



theless, inevitable that partisanism wield some influence in the policy-making process. As the chairman of the Education Committee of the Michigan Senate noted, "Republican Senators know that most of the educators in education groups are Democrats and of course this affects their decision."<sup>33</sup> The fact that H. H. Cherry was a prominent Democrat in a predominantly Democratic state therefore enhanced his effectiveness in the policy-making process.

During the thirty years Cherry was president of Western, the voters of the state elected six Democratic governors and only half as many Republican governors. In the legislature the Democrats were always in control with their margin sometimes going as high as three to one.<sup>34</sup> So, even when there was a Republican governor in office, the legislature remained in the hands of the Democrats. Only on two occasions in this thirty year period did the Republicans come close to controlling either house of the General Assembly. In 1908 during Augustus Willson's (R) administration, the Democratic margins were narrowed to 51 to 49 in the House and 22 to 16 in the Senate; and in 1922 during Edwin P. Morrow's (R) administration, the Democratic margin in the Senate was only 19 to 18 with one Independent. But even then the House Democrats enjoyed a 67 to 32 advantage. In Kentucky the governor plays a most important role in the legislative process, especially on budgetary matters, but the state legislature is still the ultimate authority as far as the state institutions

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<sup>33</sup>As quoted by Masters, Salisbury and Eliot in State Politics and the Public Schools (New York: Knopf, 1964), p. 185.

<sup>34</sup>See Appendix F for breakdown of party strength in the legislature from 1906-36.

of higher learning are concerned, and as long as the Democrats firmly controlled the legislature Cherry could get a hearing. Another factor that must be taken into consideration here is that the three Republican governors who served during this period were elected through the efforts of dissatisfied elements in the Democratic party, and as a result prominent figures in the Democratic party still had a great deal of influence in Republican administrations.

Probably more significant than purely partisan considerations as far as Cherry's success was concerned were the factional alignments within the Democratic party during this period. When the normal schools were created in 1906, J. C. W. Beckham was governor and he and his right-hand man, Percy Haly, controlled the Democratic party. In 1907, anti-Beckham Democrats helped elect Republican Augustus Willson governor, but four years later the Beckham-Haly forces came back to win with James McCreary as their candidate. In 1915 the anti-Beckham forces gained control of the Democratic party and during the next twenty years elected three Democratic governors, and in 1919 and 1927 when they could not win the nomination in the Democratic party, helped elect Republican governors to office. Following his own unsuccessful bid for the gubernatorial nomination in 1915, Cherry was usually aligned with the anti-Beckham wing of the party. Since the faction he supported was usually in control of state government during these years, Cherry was in a good position politically to promote his educational goals. His biggest set-backs came during the administrations of Augustus Willson, a Republican who vetoed a bill appropriating additional funds for

Western in 1910; and A. B. Chandler, a member of the Beckham-Haly wing of the party. It was during Chandler's administration that the state colleges were required to discontinue graduate work and the incidental fee was increased. Cherry vigorously opposed both courses of action.

So, although education is not usually a partisan issue in the state, partisan considerations do probably influence policy decisions concerning education. Had Cherry had to submit his requests to Republican governors and to a Republican dominated legislature or had the faction of the Democratic party other than the one with which he was aligned won more often, his influence would have been substantially less.

In speaking of the politics of higher education, what is probably even more significant than partisan considerations is the political nature of the process through which educational policy is made. Educational policy is made through the same process as all other public policy, and those who seek to influence educational policy must work through essentially the same framework as do those who seek to influence other policies. These same elements are present here--public opinion and public agitation, leadership by individuals, action by interest and pressure groups, action by administrative officials, and legislative, executive and judicial action--that are found in other areas of the policy process. Although there are generally no organized anti-school groups, educational policy can and does frequently become highly controversial as a result of conflicts developing over such questions as the

location of schools, curricula, allocations of money and the implementation of programs by the various types of institutions in the system.

It should be evident to educators that they too, just as other interests, must enter the political arena and compete for limited resources. In their efforts to control such matters as teacher certification standards, the educators speak as experts and can rely on their professional status to get what they want. They would prefer that this be the case in other areas, but in their efforts to get adequate finances they must rely more on their political power and influence than professional status. This hard fact of educational life is rather distressing to those who are committed to the idea that education should be above "politics." In the eyes of many, decisions on educational policy should somehow be removed from the arena where other policy decisions are made. These people fear that the competition and agitation involved in the political process give the appearance that the educators have abandoned the high ground of professional political neutrality. These individuals would prefer that decisions involving educational policy be made in a more routine manner and through a process in which the outcome is highly predictable, even if this results in the limitation of policy alternatives or the acceptance of less desirable results.<sup>35</sup> Speaking of this attitude on educational policy, Masters and his colleagues stated:

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<sup>35</sup>Similar ideas are expressed in Masters, Salisbury and Eliot, op. cit.

If the professional educators' article of faith that politics and education should be kept apart is ever taken literally, then professional educators will be totally unprepared for what awaits them.<sup>36</sup>

As long as the educators insist that education is non-political, they are operating under a handicap. Since state officials, especially state legislators, are constantly making decisions that are of vital concern to state institutions of higher learning, it is most important that the educators participate in this process. In many states, as in Kentucky, the very existence of public institutions of higher learning is based upon laws passed by the state legislature; and what the legislature has given, it can take away. Therefore relations between state college officials and state legislators take on a particular significance. As a result it is not surprising to find, as Griffenhagen and Associates did in Kentucky, close informal liaison between the colleges and members of the General Assembly. The Griffenhagen report noted numerous instances when prominent alumni held important posts in the legislature and stated that in general the state institutions had strong support in the General Assembly from the representatives of the districts where the schools are located. The report also noted that prominent political leaders were frequently appointed to ~~the~~ boards of regents.<sup>37</sup> Another indication of the close relationship between politics and education has been the frequent appointment of educator-politicians as presidents of the state colleges. Most of the state college presidents have been more outstanding for their political accomp-

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 278.

<sup>37</sup>Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Griffenhagen Report No. 10 (Frankfort, 1947), pp. 117 ff.

lishments than for their academic degrees and scholarly attainments. A frequent practice has been to elevate the elective State Superintendent of Public Instruction to a presidency when a vacancy occurs. J. G. Crabbe at Eastern, James Richmond at Murray, Robert Martin at Eastern and Harry Sparks at Murray all reached presidencies by this route. Governor Keen Johnson, under pressure from the KEA, elevated H. L. Donovan to the presidency of the University of Kentucky so he could appoint the superintendent of schools in his hometown of Richmond to the presidency at Eastern. Thus there is a high degree of politics involved when it comes to selecting the top officials of the state colleges.

Attempts to avoid political relationships can be harmful if they result in insufficient information for both the legislators and the public. The educators are in the best position to articulate the needs of the schools, and it is up to them to decide what is needed and to express these needs to the legislature and to the public. The politicians have generally felt that efforts on behalf of education yield few benefits, and thus, have usually avoided direct involvement. On the other hand, the strong commitment of most citizens to the maintenance of the public schools facilitates the access of the educational lobbyists to the decision makers and makes it difficult for the politicians to ignore their demands. It is the responsibility of the educators then to play the role of both the innovator and the broker.<sup>38</sup> In the past, however, because they had a direct stake in the outcome of these decisions and were fearful

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<sup>38</sup>Masters, Salisbury and Eliot, op. cit., pp. 271 ff.

of charges of "playing politics," educators often failed to make their interest, concern and judgment clearly known. It is most essential that effective liaison channels be maintained between educators and public officials if sound educational policy is to be formulated and carried out. As Moos and Rourke point out, "Education is far too precious a matter to be threatened by misunderstanding, misinformation or genuine grievances between the capitol and the campus."<sup>39</sup>

As the career of H. H. Cherry so amply illustrates, an intimate knowledge of the political process is essential to the successful educator.<sup>40</sup> Direct participation in the decision-making process demands that he know the legislature and how it works; that he know those who are the wielders of power and how to approach them with his case; that he know where and how pressure can be applied most effectively in the process; and that he know how to present his arguments to produce the greatest impact upon those who make the decisions. In many instances an essential step in an effort to gain effective action is to build up a consensus on legislative proposals. Pluralistic desires must often be unified to a certain extent, enough at least to secure a workable majority. Sometimes compromises must be worked out. Cherry was very much aware of this fact, and on numerous occasions he accepted compromises which salvaged something for his institution rather than fight before the legislature and lose everything. He didn't always come away from these encounters with exactly what he wanted, but he usually got

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<sup>39</sup>Malcolm Moos and Francis Rourke, The Campus and the State (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), p. 16.

part of a loaf when a whole loaf was not available.

Another fact of political life of which Cherry was well aware was the general lack of appreciation on the part of the public for the interrelationships between education and economic development, education and civic pride, and education and the legislature. Over the long run people will not support with their taxes, programs they don't understand. Cherry spent large amounts of time explaining to the people in speeches and articles the "dollars and cents" value of education to both the individual and the community. He knew that once sufficient favorable public sentiment had been developed legislative action would usually follow since the legislature was not adverse to spending public money once the voters had demonstrated their approval.

Another factor borne out by Cherry's career is that a day to day working relationship with political officials enhances the influence of the college president in getting the policies he desires. His close friendship with such political figures as A. O. Stanley, Henry B. Hines, W. J. Gooch and Seldon Glenn contributed to Cherry's influence on educational policy. Most college presidents out of necessity keep in touch with political officials, but relatively few college leaders are fully aware of the impact activities of political officials can have on their institutions. Too often there is a wide gap between the educator, who thinks more in terms of the theoretical, and the politician, who thinks in terms of the practical. Likewise there is often a sizeable gap between the appreciation of an idea and the appropriate action necessary for putting that idea into effect. For example, appreciation for the



normal school idea was rather widespread in Kentucky long before the General Assembly finally passed legislation establishing them. The more practical leaders of the normal movement realized that their philosophical and theoretical appeals failed to arouse widespread interest so they turned to political action to accomplish their goal. Like the normal school forces in Kentucky, educational interests throughout the country need to explore further the possibilities of political action. Unless those interested in education become better organized, they will simply be disregarded by those who formulate and administer policy, or their appeals will be drowned out by those of groups which are better organized and more vigorous in their efforts. One of the reasons H. H. Cherry was so influential in state educational circles was because he was on hand at each session of the General Assembly to inform the legislators of his schools' needs, and he did not hesitate to bring pressure to bear when necessary to get the legislative action desired. Regardless of how one considers his overall impact on the higher educational system of the state, one of Cherry's greatest contributions was to demonstrate the utility of political activity in securing desired educational policy.

At the 1967 convention of the National Education Association, newly elected president, Baulio Alonso, told its members:

Politics is not an unsavory business. We, who teach government, who teach democratic concepts, who help perpetuate our form of government should be the first to assume an active role in the political process. We must teach by example as well as by precept.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>As quoted in the Park City Daily News, July 9, 1967.

He went on to tell the teachers that the day when legislators passed school legislation out of friendship and magnanimity for educators was long past, if it ever existed.<sup>41</sup> Vice President Hubert Humphrey told the same group:

Teachers must be in the vanguard of politics, and in fact you are in politics just as much as I am. We should support one another as we develop a partnership to make American education more sensitive and relevant to the needs of children.<sup>42</sup>

So, today apparently educators are moving toward acceptance of what H. H. Cherry practiced for forty-five years.

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

## APPENDIX A

## Members of the State Central Committee of the Educational Improvement Commission:

## First District

A. B. Cameron, Superintendent, Mayfield Schools  
Judge Dean, Clinton  
J. K. Hendrick, Paducah

## Second District

R. L. Allen, Superintendent, Owensboro Schools  
J. J. Glenn, Madisonville  
James Garnett, Cadiz

## Third District

John M. Wilkins, Bowling Green  
Judge William Yost, Greenville  
W. H. Harrison, Russellville

## Fourth District

J. R. Coyle, Superintendent, Litchfield Schools  
Ben Ringo, Hartford  
Dave Smith, Hodgenville

## Fifth District

A. Y. Ford, Louisville  
Rosa A. Stonestreet, Louisville  
Arthur Hartwell, Louisville

## Sixth District

A. S. Berry, Newport  
John M. Lassing, Walton  
A. C. Collins, Covington

## Seventh District

Allison Holland, Eminence  
Dean Milford White, Lexington  
Dr. Burris Jenkins, Lexington, President, Transylvania College

## Eighth District

Judge M. C. Saufley, Stanford  
Ben L. Hardin, Harrodsburg  
Professor J. M. Mannix, Lancaster

## Ninth District

Charles Daltee, Mayfield  
N. W. Field, Brookfield  
J. G. Crabbe, State Superintendent, Ashville

Taken from the Glasgow Republican of July 13, 1905.

## APPENDIX B

## Normal Schools by states in 1875

<u>State</u>	<u>No.</u>
Alabama	2
Arkansas	1
California	1
Connecticut	1
Illinois	2
Indiana	1
Kansas	3
Maine	4
Maryland	2
Massachusetts	6
Michigan	1
Minnesota	3
Mississippi	2
Missouri	5
Nebraska	1
New Hampshire	1
New Jersey	1
New York	8
Pennsylvania	10
Rhode Island	1
South Carolina	1
Tennessee	1
Vermont	3
Virginia	1
West Virginia	5
Wisconsin	3

Taken from the report of the U. S. Commissioner of Education for  
1875., p. 13.

## APPENDIX C

Chart shows dates when Normal Schools were founded in various states compared to dates when the states joined the Union

<u>State</u>	<u>Normals</u>	<u>Statehood</u>
Massachusetts	1838	1788*
New York	1845	1788*
Connecticut	1849	1788*
Michigan	1850	1837
Illinois	1857	1818
Pennsylvania	1857	1787*
Minnesota	1858	1858
Nebraska	1866	1867
Alabama	1873	1819
South Carolina	1873	1788*
Tennessee	1875	1796
North Carolina	1877	1789*
Texas	1878	1845
North Dakota	1889	1889
Kentucky	1906	1792
Mississippi	1910	1817

By 1900 there were 172 Normal Schools in the nation.

\*Date of ratification of the Constitution.

## APPENDIX D

## Western enrollments from 1907-1937

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Number of Students Enrolled</u>
1907-08	1,024
1908-09	1,140
1909-10	1,400
1910-11	1,326
1911-12	1,552
1912-13	1,660
1913-14	1,707
1914-15	1,665
1915-16	1,821
1916-17	1,770
1917-18	1,241
1918-19	1,408
1919-20	1,559
1920-21	1,834
1921-22	2,616
1922-23	2,383
1923-24	2,139
1924-25	2,693
1925-26	3,027
1926-27	3,425
1927-28	3,669
1928-29	3,754
1929-30	4,004
1930-31	4,253
1931-32	3,903
1932-33	3,497
1933-34	3,607
1934-35	3,941
1935-36	4,061
1936-37	3,228

Figures for Normal School period taken from Minutes of Board of Regents, April 17, 1924. Figures for the Teachers College period taken from Cornette, page 190.

These figures show the total number of students enrolled during the year; the average attendance on a 36 week basis would be considerably lower than the numbers shown here.

## APPENDIX E

Receipts of Western Kentucky State Normal School  
1906-1922

<u>Year</u>	<u>For Current Expenses</u>	<u>For Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Receipts from Other Sources</u>	<u>Total</u>
1906-07	20,000.00	5,000.00	4,415.00	29,415.00
1907-08	20,000.00	- - - -	8,480.02	28,480.02
1908-09	50,000.00	150,000.00	5,999.57	205,999.57
1909-10	50,000.00	- - - -	9,561.43	59,561.43
1910-11	50,000.00	- - - -	11,654.01	61,654.01
1911-12	50,000.00	- - - -	26,205.70	76,205.70
1912-13	75,000.00	- - - -	23,645.45	98,645.45
1913-14	75,000.00	- - - -	33,389.38	108,389.38
1914-15	75,000.00	- - - -	29,879.20	104,879.20
1915-16	75,000.00	- - - -	20,915.31	95,915.31
1916-17	75,000.00	80,000.00*	27,109.11	182,109.11
1917-18	75,000.00	- - - -	16,566.15	91,566.15
1918-19	97,727.03	- - - -	45,949.89	143,676.92
1919-20	132,841.46	150,000.00	45,501.95	328,343.41
1920-21	127,151.60	- - - -	235,685.76	362,837.36
1921-22	136,720.20	- - - -	156,863.10	293,583.30
Totals	1,184,440.29	385,000.00	701,821.03	2,271,261.32

\*Assumption of Western's bonded indebtedness by the state.

Taken from Cornette, page 154.

Receipts of Western Kentucky State Normal School and Teachers College,  
1922-1937.

<u>Year</u>	<u>For Current Expenses</u>	<u>For Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Receipts from Other Sources</u>	<u>Total</u>
1922-23	172,271.62	20,000.00	188,715.66	380,987.28
1923-24	163,591.64	- - - -	190,674.42	354,266.06
1924-25	249,917.19	200,000.00	136,406.19	586,323.38
1925-26	317,221.55	- - - -	130,282.56	447,504.11
1926-27	373,360.25	320,000.00	148,748.47	842,108.72
1927-28	394,916.47	- - - -	143,699.45	538,615.92
1928-29	456,333.40	250,000.00	183,451.74	889,785.14
1929-30	445,627.84	- - - -	192,524.85	638,152.69
1930-31	525,344.44	250,000.00	215,112.00	990,456.44
1931-32	395,799.41	- - - -	175,923.51	571,727.92
1932-33	293,936.54	- - - -	174,030.19	467,966.73
1933-34	253,433.97	- - - -	143,442.83	396,876.80
1934-35	343,100.66	- - - -	171,718.62	514,819.28
1935-36	346,603.55	- - - -	176,723.59	523,327.14
1936-37	307,220.96	10,000.00	186,566.55	503,787.51
Totals	5,038,679.49	1,050,000.00	2,558,030.63	8,646,710.12

Taken from Cornette, page 164.





## APPENDIX C

## Members of Western's Board of Regents during H. H. Cherry's Presidency:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	
James H. Fuqua	1903-07	State Superintendent
H. K. Cole	1906-18	
E. H. Mark	1906-11	Chairman, Educational Improve. Commission
H. C. Miller	1906-08	
J. Whit Potter	1906-22	
J. G. Crabbe	1907-09	State Superintendent
Conn Linn	1908-10	Member of State Legislature
Ellsworth Regenstein	1909-11	State Superintendent
C. W. Richards	1911-12	
W. J. Gooch	1911-12	Member General Assembly, Speaker, 1908
Barksdale Hamlett	1911-15	State Superintendent
John P. Haswell	1912-24	
V. O. Gilbert	1915-19	State Superintendent
R. E. Cooper	1917-26	
George Colvin	1919-23	State Superintendent
John Dean	1919-20	
Mrs. John Gilmore	1920-24	
Sterrett Cuthbertson	1922-35	
McHenry Rhoads	1923-27	State Superintendent
H. H. Denhardt	1924-28	Lieutenant Governor, 1923-27
Mrs. J. W. James	1924-28	
H. J. Stites	1926-30	
W. C. Ball	1927-31	State Superintendent
E. B. Bassett	1928-32	
M. B. Harlin	1928-32	
M. O. Hughes	1929-36	
James Richmond	1931-35	State Superintendent
Charles Franklin	1932-36	
Henry B. Hines	1932-36	Held state jobs under Governors Beckham and Stanley
Clarence Bartlett	1935-36	
Harry Peters	1935-39	State Superintendent
B. J. Perrone	1936-	
Mrs. W. P. Drake	1936-	
F. J. Pentecost	1936-	
Huston Quin	1936-	

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Green, Kentucky

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